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OF

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VOL. I.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

A LITERARY LIFE;

OR,

BOOKS, PLACES, AND PEOPLE.

BY MARY RUSSELL MITFORD,

AUTHOR OF

"OUR VILLAGE," "BELFORD REGIS," &c.

47812

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1852.

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LONDON:
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.

TO

HENRY F. CHORLEY, ESQ.

My dear Friend,

But for you this book would never have existed. It has been to me throughout a source of great gratification. As I wrote line after line of our fine old Poets, many a cherished scene and many a happy hour seemed to live again in my memory and my heart. But no higher pleasure can it afford me, than the opportunity of expressing to you my sincere respect and admiration for talent, especially dramatic talent not even yet sufficiently known, and for innumerable personal qualities worth all the talent in the world.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,
DECEMBER, 1851.

PREFACE.

THE title of this Book gives a very imperfect idea of the contents. Perhaps it would be difficult to find a short phrase that would accurately describe a work so miscellaneous and so wayward; a work where there is far too much of personal gossip and of local scene-painting for the grave pretension of critical essays, and far too much of criticism and extract for anything approaching in the slightest degree to autobiography.

The courteous reader must take it for what it is:— an attempt to make others relish a few favourite writers as heartily as I have relished them myself. My opinions, such as they are, have at least the merit of being honest, earnest, and individual, unbiassed by the spirit of coterie or the influence of fashion. Many of my extracts will be found to comprise the best bits of neglected authors; and some, I think, as the noble murder speech of Daniel Webster, the poems of Thomas Davis, of Mrs.

James Gray, of Mr. Darley, of Mr. Noel, and of Dr. Holmes, will be new to the English public. Some again, as the delightful pleasantries of Praed, and Frere, and Catherine Fanshawe are difficult, if not impossible to procure; and others possess in perfection the sort of novelty which belongs to the forgotten. Amongst these I may class "Holcroft's Memoirs," "Richardson's Correspondence," the curious "Trial of Captain Goodere," and the "Pleader's Guide." I even fear that the choicest morsels of my book, the delicious specimens of Cowley's prose, may come under the same category. Ah! I wish I were as sure of my original matter as I am of my selections.

It is right to say that a few of these papers (like the first volume of my earliest prose work "Our Village") have appeared in an obscure Journal.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,
DECEMBER, 1851.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

A LITERARY LIFE.

I.

VARIOUS AUTHORS.

PERCY'S RELIQUES.

I NEVER take up these three heavily-bound volumes, the actual first edition, at which Dr. Johnson was wont to scoff, without feeling a pleasure quite apart from that excited by the charming book itself; although to that book, far more than to any modern school of minstrelsy, we owe the revival of the taste for romantic and lyrical poetry, which had lain dormant since the days of the Commonwealth.

This pleasure springs from a very simple cause.

The association of these ballads with the happiest days of my happy childhood.

In common with many only children, especially where the mother is of a grave and home-loving nature, I learned to read at a very early age. Before I was three years old, my father would perch me on the breakfast-table to exhibit my one accomplishment to some admiring guest, who admired all the more, because, a small puny child, looking far younger than I really was, nicely drest, as only children generally are, and gifted with an affluence of curls, I might have passed for the twin sister of my own great doll. On the table was I perched to read some Foxite newspaper, "Courier," or "Morning Chronicle," the Whiggish oracles of the day, and as my delight in the high-seasoned politics of sixty years ago, was naturally less than that of my hearers, this display of precocious acquirement was commonly rewarded, not by cakes or sugar-plums, too plentiful in my case to be very greatly cared for, but by a sort of payment in kind. I read leading articles to please the company; and my dear mother recited the "Children in the Wood" to please me. This was my reward, and I looked for my favourite ballad after every performance, just as the piping bullfinch that hung in the window looked for his lump of sugar after going through "God save the King." The two cases were exactly parallel.

One day it happened that I was called upon to exhibit, during some temporary absence of the dear mamma, and cried out amain for the ditty that I loved. My father, who spoilt me, did not know a word of it, but he hunted over all the shelves till he had found the volumes, that he might read it to me himself; and then I grew unreasonable in my demand, and coaxed, and kissed, and begged that the book might be given to my maid Nancy, that she might read it to me whenever I chose. And (have I not said that my father spoilt me?) I carried my point, and the three volumes were actually put in charge of my pretty neat maid, Nancy, (in those days nursery-governesses were not,) and she, waxing weary of the "Children in the Wood," gradually took to reading to me some of the other ballads; and as from three years old I grew to four or five, I learned to read them myself, and the book became the delight of my childhood, as it is now the solace of my age. Ah, well-a-day! sixty years have passed, and I am an old woman, whose nut-brown hair has turned to white; but I never see that heavily-bound copy of "Percy's Reliques" without the home of my infancy springing up before my eyes.

A pleasant home, in truth, it was. A large house in a little town of the north of Hampshire,—a town, so small that but for an ancient market,

very slenderly attended, nobody would have dreamt of calling it anything but a village. The breakfast-room, where I first possessed myself of my beloved ballads, was a lofty and spacious apartment, literally lined with books, which, with its Turkey carpet, its glowing fire, its sofas and its easy chairs, seemed, what indeed it was, a very nest of English comfort. The windows opened on a large, old-fashioned garden, full of old-fashioned flowers, stocks, roses, honeysuckles, and pinks; and that again led into a grassy orchard, abounding with fruit-trees, a picturesque country church with its yews and lindens on one side, and beyond, a down as smooth as velvet, dotted with rich islands of coppice, hazel, woodbine, hawthorn, and holly reaching up into the young oaks, and overhanging flowery patches of primroses, wood-sorrel, wild hyacinths and wild strawberries. On the side opposite the church, in a hollow fringed with alders and bulrushes, gleamed the bright clear lakelet, radiant with swans and water-lilies, which the simple townsfolk were content to call the Great Pond.

What a play-ground was that orchard! and what playfellows were mine! Nancy, with her trim prettiness, my own dear father, handsomest and cheerfullest of men, and the great Newfoundland dog Coe, who used to lie down at my feet, as if to invite me to mount him, and then to prance off with

his burthen, as if he enjoyed the fun as much as we did. Happy, happy days! It is good to have the memory of such a childhood! to be able to call up past delights by the mere sight and sound of Chevy Chase or the Battle of Otterbourne.

And as time wore on the fine ballad of "King Estmere," according to Bishop Percy, one of the most ancient in the collection, got to be amongst our prime favourites. Absorbed by the magic of the story, the old English never troubled us. I hope it will not trouble my readers. We, a little child, and a young country maiden, the daughter of a respectable Hampshire farmer, were no bad representatives in point of cultivation of the noble dames and their attendant damsels who had so often listened with delight to wandering minstrels in bower and hall. In one point, we had probably the advantage of them: we could read and it is most likely that they could not. For the rest every age has its own amusements; and these metrical romances, whether said or sung, may be regarded as equivalent in their day to the novels and operas of ours.

KYNG ESTMERE.

Hearken to me, gentlemen,
Come, and you shall heare;
I'll tell you of two of the boldest brethren,
That ever born y-were.

The tone of them was Adler yonge,
The tother was King Estmere;
They were as bolde men in their deedes,
As any were far and neare.

As they were drinking ale and wine,
Within Kyng Estmere's halle;
"When will ye marry a wyfe, brothér;
A wyfe to gladd us alle?"

Then bespake him, Kynge Estmere,
And answered him hastilee:
"I knowe not that ladye in any lande,
That is able to marry with me."

"King Adland hath a daughter, brother,
Men call her bright and sheene;
If I were kyng here in your stead,
That ladye sholde be queen."

Sayes, "Reade me, reade me, deare brother,
Throughout merry England;
Where we might find a messenger,
Betweene us two to send?"

Sayes, "You shal ryde yourself, brother,
I'll bear you companée;
Many through false messengers are deceived,
And I feare lest soe sholde we."

Thus they renisht them to ryde,
Of twoe good renisht steedes
And when they come to Kyng Adland's halle,
Of red golde shone their weedes.

And when they come to Kynge Adland's halls,
Before the goodlye yate
There they found good Kyng Adland,
Rearing himself thereatt.

"Nowe Christe thee save, good Kyng Adland,
Now Christ thee save and see!"
Said, "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,
Right heartily unto me."

"You have a daughter," said Adler yonge,
"Men call her bright and sheene,
My brother wold marry her to his wyfe,
Of England to be queene."

"Yesterday was at my deare daughter,
Syr Bremor the Kyng of Spayne;
And then she nicked him of naye,
I feare she'll do you the same."

"The King of Spayne is a foule paynim,
And 'lieveth on Mahoũnd;
And pitye it were that fayre ladye,
Shold marry a heathen hound."

"But grant to me," sayes Kyng Estmere,
"For my love I you praye,
That I may see your daughter deare,
Before I goe hence awaye."

"Although itt is seven yeare and more
Syth my daughter was in halle,
She shall come downe once for your sake,
To glad my guestés all."

Down then came that mayden fayre,
With laydes laced in pall,
And half a hundred of bolde knightes,
To bring her from bowre to halle;
And eke as many gentle squieres,
To waite upon them all.

[Scott has almost literally copied the four last lines of this stanza in the first canto of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." One of the many obligations that we owe to these old unknown poets, is the inspiration that Sir Walter drew from them, an inspiration to be traced almost as frequently in his prose, as in his verse.]

The talents of golde were on her head sette
Hunge lowe down to her knee;
And every rynge on her smalle finger
Shone of the chrystall free.

Sayes, "Christ you save, my deare madáme;"
Sayes, "Christ you save and see!"
Sayes, "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,
Right welcome unto me.

"And iff you love me as you saye,
So well and heartilée;
All that ever you are comen about,
Soon sped now itt may bee."

Then bespake her father deare:
"My daughter, I say naye;
Remember well the King of Spayn,
What he sayd yesterdaye.

"He wolde pull down my halles and castles,
And reeve me of my lyfe;
And ever I feare that paynim kyng,
If I reeve him of his wyfe."

"Your castles and your towres, father,
Are stronglye built aboute;
And therefore of that foul paynim,
Wee neede not stande in doubte.

"Plyghte me your troth nowe, Kyng Estmere,
By Heaven and your righte hande,
That you will marrye me to your wyfe,
And make me queen of your lande."

Then Kyng Estmere, he plight his troth,
By Heaven and his right hand,
That he would marrye her to his wyfe,
And make her queen of his lande.

And he tooke leave of that ladye fayre,
To go to his own contree;
To fetch him dukes, and lordes, and knightes,
That marryed they might be.

They had not ridden scant a myle,
A myle forthe of the towne,
But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With kempés many a one.

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With many a grim barone
Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,
Tother day to carrye her home.

Then she sent after Kyng Estmere,
In all the spede might bee,
That he must either returne and fighte,
Or goe home and lose his ladye.

One whyle then the page he went,
Another whyle he ranne;
Till he had o'ertaken Kyng Estmere,
I wis he never blanne.

"Tydinges! tydinges! Kyng Estmere!"
"What tydinges nowe, my boye?"
"Oh, tydinges I can tell to you,
That will you sore annoye.

"You had not ridden scant a myle,
A myle out of the towne,
But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With kempés many a one.

"But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With many a bold barône
Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,
Tother day to carry her home.

"That ladye faire she greetes you well,
And evermore well, by me:
You must either turne again and fighte,
Or goe home and lose your ladye."

Sayes, "Reade me, reade me, deare brother,
My reade shall ryde at thee,
Which waye we best may turne and fighte,
To save this fayre ladye?"

" Now hearken to me," sayes Adler yonge,
" And your reade must rise at me,
I quicklye will devise a waye,
To sette thy ladye free.

" My mother was a western woman,
And learnéd in gramaryé,
And when I learnéd at the schole,
Something she taught itt me.

" There groweth an herbe within this fielde,
And iff it were but known,
His color which is whyte and redde,
It will make blacke and browne.

" His color which is browne and blacke,
It will make redde and whyte;
That swordc is not all Englánde,
Upon his coate will byte.

" And you shall be a harper, brother,
Out of the north countrée;
And I'll be your boye so faine of fighte,
To bear your harpe by your knee.

" And you shall be the best harper,
That ever took harp in hand,
And I will be the best singer,
That ever songe in the land.

" It shal be written in our forheads,
All and in gramaryé,
That we twoe are the boldest men,
That are in all Christentye."

And thus they renisht them to ryde,
On twoe good renisht steedes,
And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,
Of redd gold shone their weedes.

And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,
Untill the fayre hall yate,
There they found a proud portér,
Rearing himselfe thereatt.

Sayes, "Christ thee save, thou proud portér,"
Sayes, "Christ thee save and see."
"Now you be welcome," sayd the portér,
"Of what land soever ye be."

"We been harpers," sayd Adler yonge,
"Come out of the north countrée;
We been come hither untill this place,
This proud wedding for to see."

Sayd, "An your color were whyte and redd,
As it is blacke and browne,
I'd say Kyng Estmere and his brother,
Were comen until this towne."

Then they pulled out a ryng of gold,
Layd it on the porter's arme,
"And ever we will thee proud portér,
Thou wilt say us no harme."

Sore he looked on Kyng Estmere,
And sore he handled the ryng,
Then opened to them the fayre hall yates,
He lett for no kind of thyng.

Kyng Estmere he light off his steede,
Up at the fayre hall board;
The frothe that came from his bridle bitte,
Light on Kyng Bremor's beard.

Sayes, "Stable thy steede, thou proud harpér,
Goe stable him in the stalle;
It doth not become a proud harpér,
To stable him in a kyng's halle."

"My ladde he is so lither," he sayd,
"He will do nought that's meete,
And aye that I could but find the man,
Were able him to beate."

"Thou speakest proud wordes," sayd the paynim kyng,
"Thou harper, here to me;
There is a man within this halle,
That will beate thy ladd and thee."

"O lett that man come down," he sayd,
"A sight of him wolde I see,
And when he hath beaten well my ladd,
Then he shall beate of mee."

Down then came the kemperye man,
And looked him in the eare,
For all the golde that was under heaven,
He durst not neigh him neare.

"And how now, kempe," sayd the Kyng of Spayn,
"And now what aileth thee?"

He sayes, "It is written in his forehead,
All, and in gramarye,
That for alle the golde that is under heaven,
I dare not neigh him nye."

Kyng Estmere then pulled forth his harpe,
And playcd thereon so sweete,
Upstarte the ladye from the kyng,
As he sate att the meate.

"Now stay thy harpe, thou proud harpér,
Now staye thy harpe I saye;
For an thou playest as thou beginnest,
Thou'lt till my bride awaye."

He struck upon his harpe agayne,
And playde both fair and free;
The ladye was so pleased thereatt,
She laughed loud laughters three.

"Now sell me thy harpe," said the Kyng of Spayn,
"Thy harpe and stryngs eche one,
And as many gold nobles thou shalt have,
As there be stryngs thereon."

"And what wolde ye doe with my harpe?" he sayd,
"If I did sell it ye?"—
"To playe my wyfe and I a fitt,
When we together be."

"Nowe sell me, Sir Kyng, thy bryde soe gay
As she sits laced in pall,
And as many gold nobles I will give,
As there be rungs in the hall."

"And what wolde ye doe with my bride soe gay,
Iff I did sell her yee?"—
"More seemly it is for that fair ladye
To wed with me than thee."

He played agayne both loud and shrille,
And Adler he did syng;
"O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
No harper, but a kyng.

"O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
As playnlye thou mayst see;
And I'll rid thee of that foul paynim,
Who parts thy love and thee."

The ladye lookt and the ladye blusht,
And blusht and lookt agayne,
While Adler he hath drawn his brande,
And hath Sir Bremor slayne.

Up then rose the kemperye men,
And loud they gan to crye—
"Ah, traytors! yee have slayne our kyng,
And therefore ye shall dye."

Kyng Estmere threwe the harpe asyde,
And swith he drew his brand;
And Estmere he, and Adler yonge,
Right stiff in stour can stand.

And aye their swords soe sore can byte,
Through help of gramarye,
That soon they have slayne the kemperye men,
Or forst them forth to flee.

King Estmere took that fayre ladye,
And married her to his wyfe,
And brought her home to merry England,
With her to leade his lyfe.

I must not, however, attempt to quote more of those fine old ballads here: the feuds of the Percy and the Douglas would take up too much space; so would the loves of King Arthur's court, and the adventures of Robin Hood. Even the story of the Heir of Lynne must remain untold; and I must content myself with two of the shortest and least hacknied poems in a book that for great and varied interest can hardly be surpassed. The "Lie," is said to have been written by Sir Walter Raleigh the night before his execution. That it was written at that exact time is pretty well disproved by the date of its publication in "Davison's Poems," before Sir Walter's death; it is even uncertain that Raleigh was the author; but that it is of that age is beyond all doubt; so is its extraordinary beauty —a beauty quite free from the conceits which deform too many of our finest old lyrics.

Go, Soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best,
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Go tell the Court it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Go tell the Church it shows
Men's good, and doth no good:
If Church and Court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates they live
Acting by others' actions,
Not loved unless they give,
Not strong but by their factions:
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
That rule affairs of state,
Their purpose is ambition,
Their practice only hate:
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most
They beg for more by spending,
Who in their greatest cost
Seek nothing but commending:
And if they make reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

Tell zeal it lacks devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honour how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
Tell favour how she falters;
And as they shall reply,
Give each of them the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In fickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness;
And if they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
Tell law it is contention:
And as they yield reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay:
And if they dare reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
And stand too much on seeming:
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
Tell how the country erreth;
Tell, manhood shakes off pity;
Tell, virtue least preferreth:
And if they do reply
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Although to give the lie
Deserves no less then stabbing,
Yet stab at thee who will,
No stab the soul can kill.

WINIFREDA.

About the authorship of this beautiful address to conjugal love, there is also much uncertainty. Bishop Percy calls it a "Translation from the Antient British," probably to veil the real writer. We find it included among Gilbert Cooper's poems, a diamond amongst pebbles; he never could have written it. It has been claimed for Steevens, who did the world good service as one of the earliest restorers of Shakespeare's text; but who is almost as famous for his bitter and cynical temper, as for his acuteness as a verbal critic. Could this charming love-song, true in its tenderness as the gushing notes of a bird to his sitting mate, have been poured forth by a man whom the whole world agreed in

hating? After all, we have no need to meddle with this vexed question. Let us be content to accept thankfully one of the very few purely English ballads which contradict the reproach of our Scottish and Irish neighbours, when they tell us that our love-songs are of the head, not of the heart. This poem, at least, may vie with those of Gerald Griffin in the high and rare merit of conveying the noblest sentiments in the simplest language.

Away! let nought to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care;
Let nought delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grant of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood?
We'll shine in more substantial honours,
And to be noble we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Shall sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke;
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though from fortune's lavish bounty
No mighty treasures we possess?
We'll find within our pittance plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;

For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth to age in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet-smiling Peace shall crown our dwelling,
And babes, sweet-smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung;
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue,

And when with envy, time transported,
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Surely this is the sort of poetry that ought to be popular—to be sung in our concert-rooms, and set to such airs as should be played on barrel-organs through our streets, suggesting the words and the sentiments as soon as the first notes of the melody make themselves heard under the window.

II.

IRISH AUTHORS.

THOMAS DAVIS—JOHN BANIM.

CONSIDERING his immense reputation in the Sister Island, the name of Thomas Davis has hardly found its due place in our literature. He was an Irish barrister; the most earnest, the most vehement, the most gifted, aud the most beloved of the Young Ireland party. Until the spring of 1840, when he was in his twenty-sixth year, he had only been remarkable for extreme good-nature, untiring industry, and very varied learning. At that period he blazed forth at once as a powerful and brilliant political writer, produced an eloquent and admirable "Life of Curran," became one of the founders of the "Nation" newspaper, and carried

his zeal in the cause of nationality to such excess, that he actually proposed to publish a weekly journal in the Irish tongue — an impracticable scheme which happily ended in talk.

To the newspaper which was established, and which the young patriots condescended to write in the language—to use their own phrase—of the Saxons, we owe the beautiful lyrics of Thomas Davis. The editor of the "Nation" had faith in the well-known saying of Fletcher of Saltown, "Give me the writing of the ballads, and let who will make the laws;" and in default of other aid, the regular contributors to the new journal resolved to attempt the task themselves. It is difficult to believe, but the editor of his poems dwells upon it as a well-known fact, that up to this time the author of "The Sack of Baltimore" had never written a line of verse in his life, and was, indeed, far less sanguine than his coadjutors in the success of the experiment. How completely *he* succeeded there is no need to tell, although nearly all that he has written was the work of one hurried year, thrown off in the midst of a thousand occupations, and a thousand claims. A very few years more, and his brief and bright career was cut short by a sudden illness, which carried him rapidly to the grave, beloved and lamented by his countrymen of every sect and of every party:

"His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes:
. . . He had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept."

Oh! that he had lived to love Ireland, not better, but more wisely, and to write volumes upon volumes of such lyrics as the two first which I transcribe, such biographies as his "Life of Curran," and such criticism as his "Essay upon Irish Song!"

I will deal more tenderly than he would have done with printer and reader, by giving them as little as I can of his beloved Cymric words (such is the young Irish name for the old Irish language); and by sparing them altogether his beloved Cymric character, which I have before my eyes at this moment, looking exactly like a cross between Arabic and Chinese.

THE SACK OF BALTIMORE.

Baltimore is a small sea-port, in the barony of Carbery, in South Munster. It grew up round a castle of O'Driscoll's, and was, after his ruin, colonized by the English. On the 20th of June, 1631, the crew of two Algerine galleys landed in the dead of the night, sacked the town, and bore off into slavery all who were not too old or too young, or too fierce, for their purpose. The pirates were

steered up the intricate channel by one Hackett, a Dungarvon fisherman, whom they had taken at sea for that office. Two years after he was convicted and executed for the crime.

The summer sun is falling soft on Carberry's hundred isles;
The summer sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough defiles;
Old Inisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird;
And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean-tide is heard;
The hookers lie upon the beach; the children cease their play;
The gossips leave the little inn; the households kneel to pray;
And full of love and peace and rest, its daily labour o'er,
Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there,
No sound, except that throbbing wave, in earth or sea or air;
The massive capes and ruined towers seem conscious of the calm;
The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm.
So still the night, those two long barques round Dunashad that glide,
Must trust their oars, methinks not few, against the ebbing tide;
Oh! some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the shore,
They bring some lover to his bride, who sighs in Baltimore.

All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,
And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet;

A stifled gasp! a dreamy noisé!—"The roof is in a flame!"
From out their beds and to their doors rush maid and sire and dame,
And meet upon the threshold-stone, the gleaming sabre's fall,
And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl,
The yell of "Allah!" breaks above the prayer and shriek and roar—
Oh! blessed God! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore!

Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword;
Then sprang the mother on the brand with which her son was gored;
Then sank the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild;
Then fled the maiden, moaning faint, and nestled with the child.
But see yon pirate strangled lies and crushed with splashing heel.
While o'er him, in an Irish hand, there sweeps his Syrian steel.
Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
There's *one* heart well avenged in the sack of Baltimore!

Midsummer morn, in woodland nigh, the birds begin to sing,
They see not now the milking maids, deserted is the spring!
Midsummer day, this gallant rides from distant Bandon's town,
Those hookers crossed from stormy Skull, that skiff from Affadown,

They only found the smoking walls with neighbours' blood besprent,
And on the strewed and trampled beach awhile they wildly went,
Then dashed to sea, and passed Cape Clear, and saw five leagues before,
The pirate galleys vanishing that ravaged Baltimore.

Oh! some must tug the galley's oar, and some must tend the steed,
This boy will bear a Scheik's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed.
Oh! some are for the arsenals by beauteous Dardanelles,
And some are in the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells.
The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey;
She's safe! she's dead! she stabbed him in the midst of his serai!
And, when to die a death of fire, that noble maid they bore,
She only smiled — O'Driscoll's child! — she thought of Baltimore!

'Tis two long years since sank the town beneath that bloody band,
And all around its trampled hearths a larger concourse stand,
Where, high upon a gallows tree, a yelling wretch is seen,
'Tis Hackett of Dungarvon, he who steered the Algerine.
He fell amid a sullen shout, with scarce a passing prayer,
For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there.
Some muttered of MacMurchadh, who had brought the Norman o'er;
Some cursed him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore.

The more we study this ballad, the more extraordinary does it appear, that it should have been the work of an unpractised hand. Not only is it full of spirit and of melody, qualities not incompatible with inexperience in poetical composition, but the artistic merit is so great. Picture succeeds to picture, each perfect in itself, and each conducing to the effect of the whole. There is not a careless line, or a word out of place; and how the epithets paint: "fibrous sod," "heavy balm," "shearing sword!" The Oriental portion is as complete in what the French call local colour as the Irish. He was learned, was Thomas Davis, and wrote of nothing that he could not have taught. It is something that he should have left a poem like this, altogether untinged by party politics, for the pride and admiration of all who share a common language, whether Celt or Saxon.

MAIRE BHAN ASTOIR*—"FAIR MARY MY TREASURE."

IRISH EMIGRANT SONG.

In a valley far away,
With my Maire bhan astoir,
Short would be the summer day,
Ever loving more and more.

* Pronounced Maur-ya Vaun Asthore.

Winter days would all grow long
With the light her heart would pour,
With her kisses and her song
And her loving maith go léor.*
Fond is Maire bhan astoir,
Fair is Maire bhan astoir,
Sweet as ripple on the shore
Sings my Maire bhan astoir.

Oh! her sire is very proud,
And her mother cold as stone;
But her brother bravely vowed
She should be my bride alone;
For he knew I loved her well,
And he knew she loved me too,
So he sought their pride to quell,
But 'twas all in vain to sue.
True is Maire bhan astoir,
Tried is Maire bhan astoir,
Had I wings I'd never soar
From my Maire bhan astoir.

There are lands where many toil
Surely reaps the crop it sows,
Glorious woods and teeming soil
Where the broad Missouri flows;
Through the trees the smoke shall rise
From our hearth with maith go léor,
There shall shine the happy eyes
Of my Maire bhan astoir.

* Much plenty, or in abundance.

Mild is Maire bhan astoir,
Mine is Maire bhan astoir,
Saints will watch about the door
Of my Maire bhan astoir.

I subjoin one of the lyrics, a ballad of the "Brigade," which produced so much effect, when printed on the broad sheet of the "Nation." It is a graphic and dramatic battle-song, full of life and action; too well calculated to excite that most excitable people, for whose gratification it was written.

FONTENOY.

(1745.)

Thrice, at the huts of Fontenoy, the English column failed;
And twice, the lines of Saint Antoine, the Dutch in vain assailed;
For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,
And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.
As vainly through De Barri's wood the British soldiers burst,
The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dispersed.
The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!
And mustering comes his chosen troops like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread,
Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head.

Steady they step adown the slope, steady they mount the hill,
Steady they load, steady they fire, moving right onward still,
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,
Through rampart, trench and palisade, and bullets showering fast;
And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,
With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force:
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks,
They break as breaks the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean banks!

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;
As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground;
Bomb shell and grape and round-shot tore, still on they marched and fired;
Fast, from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.
"Push on, my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried:
To death they rush, but rude their shock, not unavenged they died.
On, through the camp the column trod, King Louis turned his rein:
"Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed, "the Irish troops remain."
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo
Had not these exiles ready been, fresh, vehement and true.

"Lord Clare," he says, "you have your wish, there are your Saxon foes!"
The Marshal almost smiles to see how furiously he goes!

How fierce the look these exiles wear, who're wont to be so gay!
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day;
The treaty broken ere the ink wherewith 'twas writ could dry;
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's parting cry;
Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown;
Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,
Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as, halting, he commands,
"Fix bayonets—charge!" Like mountain storm rush on these fiery bands!—
Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,
Yet, mustering all the strength they have, they make a gallant show.
They dress their ranks upon the hill, to face that battle-wind;
Their bayonets the breakers' foam; like rocks the men behind!
One volley crashes from their line, when through the surging smoke,
With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza!
"Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sacsanagh!"

Like lions leaping at a fold, when mad with hunger's pang,
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang;
Bright was their steel, 'tis bloody now, their guns are filled with gore;
Through shattered ranks and severed files and trampled flags they tore;

The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied,
scattered, fled;
The green hill-side is matted close with dying and with dead.
Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack.
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,
With bloody plumes the Irish stand: the field is fought and
won!

John Banim was the founder of that school of Irish novelists, which, always excepting its blameless purity, so much resembles the modern romantic French school, that if it were possible to suspect Messieurs Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, and Alexander Dumas of reading the English which they never approach without such ludicrous blunders, one might fancy that many-volumed tribe to have stolen their peculiar inspiration from the O'Hara family. Of a certainty the tales of Mr. Banim were purely original. They had no precursors either in our own language or in any other, and they produced accordingly the sort of impression more vivid than durable, which highly-coloured and deeply-shadowed novelty is sure to make on the public mind. But they are also intensely national. They reflect Irish scenery, Irish character, Irish crime, and Irish virtue, with a general truth which in spite of their tendency to melo-dramatic effects, will keep them fresh and life-

like for many a day after the mere fashion of the novel of the season shall be past and gone. The last of his works, especially "Father Connell," contains the portrait of a parish priest so exquisitely simple, natural, and tender, that in the whole range of fiction I know nothing more charming. The subject was one that the author loved; witness the following rude, rugged, homely song, which explains so well the imperishable ties which unite the peasant to his pastor.

SOGGARTH AROON.*

Am I the slave they say,
Soggarth aroon?
Since you did show the way,
Soggarth aroon,
Their slave no more to be,
While they would work with me
Ould Ireland's slavery,
Soggarth aroon?

Why not her poorest man,
Soggarth aroon,
Try and do all he can,
Soggarth aroon,
Her commands to fulfil
Of his own heart and will,
Side by side with you still,
Soggarth aroon?

* Anglice, Priest Dear.

Loyal and brave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Yet be no slave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Nor out of fear to you
Stand up so near to you—
Och! out of fear to *you*,
Soggarth aroon!

Who in the winter night,
Soggarth aroon,
When the could blast did bite,
Soggarth aroon,
Came to my cabin-door,
And on my earthen floor
Knelt by me sick and poor,
Soggarth aroon?

Who on the marriage-day,
Soggarth aroon,
Made the poor cabin gay,
Soggarth aroon,
And did both laugh and sing,
Making our hearts to ring
At the poor christening,
Soggarth aroon?

Who as friend only met,
Soggarth aroon;
Never did flout me yet,
Soggarth aroon,
And when my hearth was dim,
Gave, while his eye did brim,

What I should give to him,
Soggarth aroon?

Och! you, and only you,
Soggarth aroon!
And for this I was true to you,
Soggarth aroon;
In love they'll never shake,
When for ould Ireland's sake,
We a true part did take,
Soggarth aroon!

There is a small and little-known volume of these rough peasant-ballads, full of the same truth and intensity of feeling,—songs which seem destined to be sung at the wakes and patterns of Ireland. But, to say nothing of his fine classical tragedy of "Damon and Pythias," Mr. Banim, so successful in the delineation of the sweet, delicate, almost idealised girl of the people, has written at least one song that may rival Gerald Griffin in grace and sentiment. A lover sings it to his mistress.

'Tis not for love of gold I go,
'Tis not for love of fame;
Though fortune may her smile bestow,
And I may win a name,
Ailleen;
And I may win a name.

And yet it is for gold I go,
And yet it is for fame;

That they may deck another brow,
And bless another name,
Ailleen;
And bless another name.

For this, but this, I go—for this
I leave thy love awhile,
And all the soft and quiet bliss
Of thy young faithful smile,
Ailleen;
Of thy young faithful smile.

And I go to brave a world I hate,
And woo it o'er and o'er,
And tempt a wave, and try a fate
Upon a stranger shore,
Ailleen;
Upon a stranger shore.

Oh! when the bays are all my own,
I know a heart will care!
Oh! when the gold is sought and won,
I know a brow will wear,
Ailleen;
I know a brow will wear!

And, when with both returned again
My native land I see,
I know a smile will meet me then,
And a hand will welcome me,
Ailleen;
And a hand will welcome me!

Is it not strange that with such ballads as these of John Banim, Thomas Davis, and Gerald Griffin before us, Mr. Moore, that great and undoubted wit, should pass in the highest English circles for the only song-writer of Ireland? Do people really prefer flowers made of silk and cambric, of gum and wire, the work of human hands however perfect, to such as Mother Earth sends forth in the gushing spring time, full of sap and odour, sparkling with sunshine and dripping with dew?

I can find no regular life of our poet; nothing beyond a chance record of a kind word to one young struggling countryman, and a kind act to another. He died in the vigour of his age; married, and as I fear poor. The too frequent story of a man of genius.

III.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

THOMAS NOEL.

THREE summers ago I spent a few pleasant weeks among some of the loveliest scenery of our great river. The banks of the Thames, always beautiful, are nowhere more delightful than in the neighbourhood of Maidenhead,—one side ramparted by the high, abrupt chalky cliffs of Buckinghamshire; the other edging gently away into our rich Berkshire meadows, chequered with villages, villas, and woods.

My own temporary home was one of singular beauty,—a snug cottage at Taplow, looking over a garden full of honeysuckles, lilies, and roses, to a miniature terrace, whose steps led down into the water, or rather into our little boat; the fine old

bridge at Maidenhead just below us; the magnificent woods of Cliefden, crowned with the lordly mansion (now, alas! a second time burnt down), rising high above; and the broad majestic river, fringed with willow and alder, gay with an ever-changing variety—the trim pleasure-yacht, the busy barge, or the punt of the solitary angler, gliding by placidly and slowly, the very image of calm and conscious power. No pleasanter residence, through the sultry months of July and August, than the Bridge Cottage at Taplow!

Besides the natural advantages of the situation, we were within reach of many interesting places, of which we, as strangers, contrived—as strangers usually do—to see a great deal more than the actual residents.

A six-mile drive took us to the lordly towers of Windsor—the most queenly of our palaces—with the adjuncts that so well become the royal residence, St. George's Chapel and Eton College, fitting shrines of learning and devotion! Windsor was full of charm. The ghostly shadow of a tree, that is, or passes for, Herne's oak—for the very man of whom we inquired our way maintained that the tree was apocryphal, although in such cases I hold it wisest and pleasantest to believe—the quaint old town itself, with the localities immortalised by Sir John and Sir Hugh, Dame Quickly and Justice Shallow, and all

the company of the Merry Wives, had to me an unfailing attraction. To Windsor we drove again and again, until the pony spontaneously turned his head Windsor-ward.

Then we reviewed the haunts of Gray, the house of Stoke Pogis, and the churchyard where he is buried, and which contains the touching epitaph wherein the pious son commemorates "the careful mother of many children, one of whom only had the misfortune to survive her." To that spot we drove one bright summer day, and we were not the only visitants. It was pleasant to see one admirer seated under a tree, sketching the church, and another party, escorted by the clergyman, walking reverently through it. Stoke Pogis, however, is not without its rivals; and we also visited the old church at Upton, whose ivy-mantled tower claims to be the veritable tower of the "Elegy." A very curious scene did that old church exhibit—that of an edifice not yet decayed, but abandoned to decay; an incipient ruin, such as probably might have been paralleled in the monasteries of England after the Reformation, or in the churches of France after the first Revolution. The walls were still standing, still full of monuments and monumental inscriptions; in some the gilding was yet fresh, and one tablet especially had been placed there very recently, commemorating the talent and virtues of the cele-

brated astronomer, Sir John Herschell. But the windows were denuded of their glass, the font broken, the pews dismantled, whilst on the tottering reading desk one of the great Prayer-books, all mouldy and damp, still lay open—last vestige of the holy services with which it once resounded. Another church had been erected, but it looked new and naked, and everybody seemed to regret the old place of worship, the roof of which was remarkable for the purity of its design.*

Another of our excursions was to Ockwells—a curious and beautiful specimen of domestic architecture in the days before the Tudors. Strange it seems to me that no one has exactly imitated that graceful front, with its steep roof terminated on either side by two projecting gables, the inner one lower than the other, adorned with oak carving, regular and delicate as that on an ivory fan. The porch has equal elegance. One almost expects to see some baronial hawking party, or some bridal procession, issue from its recesses. The great hall, although its grand open roof has been barbarously closed up, still retains its fine proportions, its dais, its music gallery, and the long range of windows, still adorned with the mottos and escutcheons of the Norreys's, their kindred and allies. It has long

* Since writing this paper, the fine old church in question has been completely restored.

been used as a farm-house; and one marvels that the painted windows should have remained uninjured through four centuries of neglect and change. Much that was interesting has disappeared, but enough still remains to gratify those who love to examine the picturesque dwellings of our ancestors. The noble staircase, the iron-studded door, the prodigious lock, the gigantic key (too heavy for a woman to wield), the cloistered passages, the old-fashioned buttery-hatch, give a view not merely of the degree of civilisation of the age, but of the habits and customs of familiar daily life.

Another drive took us to the old grounds of Lady Place, where, in demolishing the house, care had been taken to preserve the vaults in which the great Whig leaders wrote and signed the famous letter to William of Orange, which drove James the Second from the throne. A gloomy place it is now—a sort of underground ruin — and gloomy enough the patriots must have found it on that memorable occasion: the tombs of the monks (it had formerly been a monastery) under their feet, the rugged walls around them, and no ray of light, except the lanterns they may have brought with them, or the torches which they lit. Surely the signature of that summons which secured the liberties of England would make an impressive picture—Lord Somers in the foreground, and the other Whig statesmen

grouped around him. A Latin inscription records a visit made by George III. to the vaults; and truly it is amongst the places that monarchs would do well to visit—full of stern lessons!

Chief pilgrimage of all was one that led us first to Beaconsfield, through the delightful lanes of Buckinghamshire, with their luxuriance of hedge-row timber, and their patches of heathy common. There we paid willing homage to all that remained of the habitation consecrated by the genius of Edmund Burke. Little is left, beyond gates and outbuildings, for the house has been burnt down and the grounds disparked; but still some of his old walks remained, and an old well and traces of an old garden—and pleasant it was to tread where such a man had trodden, and to converse with the few who still remembered him. We saw, too, the stalwart yeoman who had the honor not only of furnishing to Sir Joshua the model of his "Infant Hercules," but even of suggesting the subject. Thus it happened. Passing a few days with Mr. Burke at his favourite retirement, the great painter accompanied his host on a visit to his bailiff. A noble boy lay sprawling in the cradle in the room where they sat. His mother would fain have removed him, but Sir Joshua, then commissioned to paint a picture for the Empress Catharine, requested that the child might remain, sent with all speed for

palette and easel, and accomplished his task with that success which so frequently waits upon a sudden inspiration. It is remarkable that the good farmer, whose hearty cordial kindness I shall not soon forget, has kept in a manner most unusual the promise of his sturdy infancy, and makes as near an approach to the proportions of the fabled Hercules as ever Buckinghamshire yeoman displayed.

Beaconsfield, however, and even the cherished retirement of Burke, was by no means the gaol of our pilgrimage. The true shrine was to be found four miles farther, in the small cottage at Chalfont St. Giles, where Milton found a refuge during the Great Plague of London.

The road wound through lanes still shadier and hedgerows still richer, where the tall trees rose from banks overhung with fern, intermixed with spires of purple foxglove; sometimes broken by a bit of mossy park-paling, sometimes by the light shades of a beech-wood, until at last we reached the quiet and secluded village whose very first dwelling was consecrated by the abode of the great poet.

It is a small tenement of four rooms, one on either side the door, standing in a little garden, and having its gable to the road. A short inscription, almost hidden by the foliage of the vine, tells that Milton once lived within those sacred walls. The cottage has been so seldom visited, is so little desecrated by

thronging admirers, and has suffered so little from alteration or decay, and all about it has so exactly the serene and tranquil aspect that one should expect to see in an English village two centuries ago, that it requires but a slight effort of fancy to image to ourselves the blind old bard still sitting in that little parlour, or sunning himself on the garden-seat beside the well. Milton is said to have corrected at Chalfont some of the sheets of the "Paradise Lost." The "Paradise Regained" he certainly composed there. One loves to think of him in that calm retreat,—to look round that poor room and think how Genius ennobles all she touches! Heaven forefend that change in any shape, whether of embellishment or of decay, should fall upon that cottage!

Another resort of ours, not a pilgrimage, but a haunt, was the forest of old pollards, known by the name of Burnham Beeches. A real forest it is—six hundred acres in extent, and varied by steep declivities, wild dells, and tangled dingles. The ground, clothed with the fine short turf, where the thyme and the harebell love to grow, is partly covered with luxuriant fern; and the juniper and the holly form a fitting underwood for those magnificent trees, hollowed by age, whose profuse canopy of leafy boughs seems so much too heavy for the thin rind by which it is supported. Mr. Grote has a house

here on which we looked with reverence; and in one of the loveliest spots we came upon a monument erected by Mrs. Grote in memory of Mendelssohn, and enriched by an elegant inscription from her pen.

We were never weary of wandering among the Burnham Beeches; sometimes taking Dropmore by the way, where the taste of the late Lord Grenville created from a barren heath a perfect Eden of rare trees and matchless flowers. But even better than amid that sweet woodland scene did I love to ramble by the side of the Thames, as it bounded the beautiful grounds of Lord Orkney, or the magnificent demesne of Sir George Warrender, the verdant lawns of Cliefden.

That place also is full of memories. There it was that the famous Duke of Buckingham fought his no less famous duel with Lord Shrewsbury, whilst the fair countess, dressed rather than disguised, as a page, held the horse of her victorious paramour. We loved to gaze on that princely mansion, repeating to each other the marvellous lines in which our two matchless satirists have immortalised the Duke's follies, and doubting which portrait were the best. We may at least be sure that no third painter will excel them.* Alas! who reads Pope or

* And yet they have been almost equalled by a French artist: Count Anthony Hamilton in the Mémoires de Grammont.

Dryden now! I am afraid, very much afraid, that to many a fair young reader, these celebrated characters will be as good as manuscript. I will at all events try the experiment. Here they be:

"In the first rank of these did Zimri stand:
A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome;
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ
With something new to wish or to enjoy!"

DRYDEN. *Absalom and Achitophel.*

Now for the little hunchback of Twickenham—

"In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
The walls of plaster, and the floor of dung;
On once a flock bed, but repaired with straw,
With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw,
The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty rod.
Great Villiers lies:—but ah, how changed from him,
That life of pleasure and that soul of whim,
Gallant and gay in Cliefden's proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love!
Or just as gay at council 'mid the ring
Of mimic statesmen and their merry king!

No wit to flatter left of all his store;
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more;
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends
And fame, the lord of useless thousands ends!"

POPE. *Moral Essays.*

The charming walk at Lord Orkney's, which I was so kindly permitted to enjoy, and which I did enjoy so thoroughly, ran between the noble river shaded and overhung by trees, and the high steep chalky cliff, also clothed with trees to the very summit; trees of all kinds, the oak, the beech, the ash, the elm, the yew, the cypress, the pine, the juniper. The woodland path, no trimly kept walk, but a rude narrow cart-track, thridded its way amidst nooks so closely planted and branches so interlaced, that oftentimes the water only glanced upon us by glimpses through the foliage, just as in looking upward we caught a gleam of the blue sky. Sometimes again it was totally hidden, and we only felt the presence of the river by the refreshing coolness of the breeze, and the gentle rippling of the slow current; while, sometimes, a sudden opening would give to view some rude landing-place where the boats were laden with chalk; or a vista accidentally formed by the felling of some large tree would show us an old mill across the stream framed in by meeting branches like a picture.

The Taplow spring, with its pretty cottage for pic-nics, often proved the end of our evening walks.

I loved to see the gushing of that cool clear sparkling spring, plashing over the huge stones that seemed meant to restrain it, sporting in pools and eddies, and lost almost as soon as it wells from the earth amid the waters of the silver Thames.

Steep as it seems and is, the chalky cliff is not inaccessible. Here and there it recedes from the river, sometimes hollowed into deep caves, and then again it advances with a more gradual slope, so as to admit of zigzag walks practised to the summit. These walks, almost buried amongst the rich foliage, have a singular attraction in their steepness and their difficulty. Long branches of ivy trail from the cliff in every direction, mingled at this season with a gorgeous profusion of the clinging woodbine, the yellow St. John's wort, and the large purple flowers of the Canterbury bell. Our steps were literally impeded by these long garlands. Our feet were perpetually entangled in them. We crushed them as we passed.

The view from the Hermit's hut, on the height, is amongst those that can never be forgotten. We looked over the tops of the tall trees, down a sheer descent of I know not how many hundred feet, to a weir upon the Thames, foaming and brawling under our very eyes. Just beyond was one of the loveliest reaches of the river, with Cookham bridge and the fine old church forming a picture in itself. Then came a wide extent of field and

meadow, mansion and village, tower and spire, the rich woods of Berkshire interspersed amongst all, the noble river winding away into the distance, and the far-off hills mingling with the clouds, until we knew not which was earth, or which was sky.

Very pleasant was that sojourn by the Thames side. And amongst the pleasures that I most value, one of those which I brought home with me and trust never to lose, must be reckoned the becoming acquainted with Mr. Noel's "Rymes and Roundelayes," and forming, not an acquaintance, for we have never met, but a friendship with the author.

Mr. Noel resides in a beautiful place in that beautiful neighbourhood, leading the life of an accomplished but somewhat secluded country gentleman:—a most enviable life, and one well adapted to the observation of nature and to the production of poetry, but by no means so well calculated to make a volume of poems extensively known. Hence it is that the elegant and graphic description of Thames scenery which I subjoin, although it has been published nearly ten years, will probably have the charm of novelty to many of my readers.

A THAMES VOYAGE.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark
On the bosom of Father Thames,
And before her bows the wavelets dark
Break into a thousand gems.

The kingfisher not straighter darts
Down the stream to his sweet mate's nest,
Than our arrowy pinnace shoots and parts
The river's yielding breast.

We have passed the chalk-cliff on whose crown
The hermit's hut doth cling,
And the bank, whose hanging woods look down
On the smile of Cliefden spring.

We are come where Hedsor's crested fount
Pours forth its babbling rill,
And where the charmed eye loves to mount
To the small church on the hill.

On, like a hawk upon the wing,
Our little wherry flies;
Against her bows the ripples sing,
And the wavelets round her rise.

In view is Cookham's ivied tower;
And, up yon willowy reach,
Enfolding many a fairy bower,
Wave Bisham's woods of beech.

O'er Marlow's loveliest vale they look,
And its spire that seeks the skies;
And afar, to where in its meadow-nook
Medmenham's Abbey lies.

Still on, still on, as we smoothly glide,
There are charms that woo the eye,—
Boughs waving green in the pictured tide,
And the blue reflected sky.

Swift dragon-flies, with their gauzy wings,
Flit glistening to and fro,
And murmuring hosts of moving things
O'er the waters glance and glow.

There are spots where nestle wild flowers small
With many a mingling gleam;
Where the broad flag waves, and the bulrush tall
Nods still to the thrusting stream.

The Forget-me-not on the water's edge
Reveals her lovely hue,
Where the broken bank, between the sedge,
Is embroidered with her blue.

And in bays where matted foliage weaves
A shadowy arch on high,
Serene on broad and bronze-like leaves,
The virgin lilies lie.

Fair fall those bonny flowers! O how
I love their petals bright!
Smoother than Ariel's moonlit brow!
The Water-Nymph's delight!

Those milk-white cups with a golden core,
Like marble lamps, that throw
So soft a light on the bordering shore,
And the waves that round them flow!

Steadily, steadily, speeds our bark,
O'er the silvery whirls she springs;
While merry as lay of morning lark
The watery carol rings.

Lo! a sailing swan, with a little fleet
Of cygnets by her side,
Pushing her snowy bosom sweet
Against the bubbling tide!

And see—was ever a lovelier sight?
One little bird afloat
On its mother's back, 'neath her wing so white,—
A beauteous living boat!

The threatful male, as he sails ahead,
Like a champion proud and brave,
Makes, with his ruffling wings outspread,
Fierce jerks along the wave.

He tramples the stream, as we pass him by,
In wrath from its surface springs,
And after our boat begins to fly
With loudly-flapping wings.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark,
And the curling current stems,
Where the willows cast their shadows dark,
And the ripples gleam like gems;
Oh, there's many a charming scene so mark
From the bosom of Father Thames

The following powerful lines are better known, and serve to show the variety of Mr. Noel's talent.

THE PAUPER'S DRIVE.

There's a grim one-horse hearse in a jolly round trot;
To the churchyard a pauper is going, I wot;

The road it is rough, and the hearse has no springs,
And hark to the dirge that the sad driver sings :—
Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper, whom nobody owns.

Oh, where are the mourners ? Alas ! there are none ;
He has left not a gap in the world now he's gone ;
Not a tear in the eye of child, woman, or man :—
To the grave with his carcase as fast as you can.
Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper, whom nobody owns.

What a jolting, and creaking, and splashing, and din !
The whip how it cracks, and the wheels how they spin !
How the dirt right and left o'er the hedges is hurled !
The pauper at length makes a noise in the world.
Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper, whom nobody owns.

Poor pauper defunct ! he has made some approach
To gentility, now that he's stretched in a coach ;
He's taking a drive in his carriage at last,
But it will not be long if he goes on so fast !
Rattle his bones over the stones ;
He's only a pauper, whom nobody owns.

* * * * *

The author tells me that this incident was taken from the life. He witnessed such a funeral :—a coffin in a cart driven at full speed.

But a truce to this strain ! for my soul it is sad
To think that a heart in humanity clad
Should make, like the brutes, such a desolate end,
And depart from the light without leaving a friend.
Bear softly his bones over the stones,
Though a pauper, he's one whom his Maker yet owns.

IV.

OLD AUTHORS.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

As in the case of Ben Jonson, posterity values his writings for very different qualities from those which obtained his high reputation amongst his contemporaries, so it has happened to Cowley.

Praised in his day as a great poet, the head of the school of poets called metaphysical, he is now chiefly known by those prose essays, all too short and all too few, which, whether for thought or for expression, have rarely been excelled by any writer in any language. They are eminently distinguished for the grace, the finish, and the clearness which his verse too often wants. That there is one cry which pervades them—vanity of vanities! all is vanity!—that there is an almost ostentatious longing for obscurity and retirement, may be accounted for by

the fact that at an early age Cowley was thrown amongst the cavaliers of the civil wars, sharing the exile and the return of the Stuarts, and doubtless disgusted, as so pure a writer was pretty sure to be, by a dissolute Court, with whom he would find it easier to sympathize in its misery than in its triumph. Buckingham, with the fellow-feeling of talent for talent, appears to have been kind to him; and when he fled from the world (not very far, he found his beloved solitude at Chertsey), it is satisfactory to know that he so far escaped the proverbial ingratitude of the Restoration, to carry with him an income sufficient for his moderate wants. He did not long survive a retirement which, Sprat says, in a curious life prefixed to the edition of his works in 1719, "agreed better with his mind than his body."

It is difficult to select from a volume so abundant in riches; but I will begin by his opinion of theatrical audiences contained in "The Preface to the Cutter of Coleman Street:"

"There is no writer but may fail sometimes in point of wit; and it is no less frequent for the auditors to fail in point of judgment. I perceive plainly by daily experience that Fortune is mistress of the theatre, as Tully says it is of all popular assemblies. No man can tell sometimes from whence the invisible winds rise that move them. There are a multitude of people who are truly and only

spectators of a play without any use of their understanding; and these carry it sometimes by the strength of their numbers. There are others who use their understandings too much; who think it a sign of weakness and stupidity to let anything pass by them unattacked, and that the honour of their judgment (as some mortals imagine of their courage) consists in quarrelling with everything. We are, therefore, wonderful wise men, and have a fine business of it, we who spend our time in poetry. I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself when I think on it; and if I had a son inclined by nature to the same folly, I believe I should bind him from it by the strictest conjurations of a paternal blessing. For what can be more ridiculous than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour on their part more earnestly to take offence? to expose oneself voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow passage to unprofitable fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the ignorant, and by armed troops of the malicious? If we do ill, many discover, it, and all despise us. If we do well, but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly. If we commit errors, there is no pardon; if we could do wonders, there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling givers."

Of course his play had been coldly received. Here is another bit of autobiography, singularly

interesting, as coming from one who, although he never could retain the rules of grammar, was an eminent scholar, and the most precocious of all poets. It forms part of the essay, headed, "Of Myself."

"It is a hard and a nice subject for a man to write of himself. It pains his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of my offending him in that kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity.

* * * *

"As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew, or was capable of guessing, what the world, or the glories or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others by an antipathy, imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of roaming about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion if I could find him of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me by any persuasions or encouragements to learn without book

the common rules of grammar; in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the same exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind that I am now (which, I confess, I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode, which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I have set down (if a very little were corrected) I should hardly now be much ashamed:

"This only grant me, that my means may lie,
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone;
The unknown are better than ill known;
Rumour can ope the grave.
Acquaintance I would have, but when't depends,
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

"Books should, as business, entertain the light,
And sleep as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house, a cottage more
Than palace; and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With nature's hand, not art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

"Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish my fate;
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

"You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace); and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stampt first, or rather engraved, these characters in me: they were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grows proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there: for I remember when I began to read and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser's works. This I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dancing of the numbers; so that I think I had read

him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet.

"With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the University; but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the Court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant (for that was the state then of the English and French Courts); yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw clearly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewilder or entice me, when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm although I saw many ships

which rid safely and bravely in it: a storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect:

> "Well, then, I now do plainly see,
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.

"And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy Restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortune: but I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself; and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it:

> "Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,
> Nor at the exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar.
> Content thyself with the small barren praise,
> Which neglected verse doth raise.

"However, by the failing of the forces which I

had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on. I cast myself into it a *corps perdu* without making capitulations or taking counsel of Fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, Take thy ease. I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoilt the happiness of an emperor, as well as mine. Yet do I neither repent nor alter my course *non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum*, nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

> "Nor by me e'er shall you,
> You of all names, the sweetest and the best,
> You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
> You, gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
> As long as life itself forsakes not me."

The same vein runs through the charming Essay "Of Obscurity."

* * * "The pleasantest condition of life is in *incognito*. What a brave privilege is it to be free from all contentions, from all enyving, or being envied, from receiving or paying all kind of ceremonies! It is, in my mind, a very delightful pastime for two

good and agreeable friends to travel up and down together in places where they are by nobody known, nor know anybody. It was the case of Æneas and his Achates, when they walked invisibly about the fields and streets of Carthage. Venus herself,

> "A veil of thickened air around them cast,
> That none might know or see them as they past.

"The common story of Demosthenes's confession, that he had taken a great pleasure in hearing of a basket-woman say, as he passed: 'This is that Demosthenes,' is wonderful ridiculous from so solid an orator. I myself have often met with that temptation to vanity (if it were any); but am so far from finding it any pleasure, that it only makes me run faster from the place till I get (as it were) out of sight-shot. Democritus relates, and in such a manner as if he gloried in the good fortune and commodity of it, that when he came to Athens, nobody there did so much as take notice of him; and Epicurus lived there very well, that is, lay hid many years in his gardens, so famous since that time, with his friend Metrodorus; after whose death, making in one of his letters a kind commemoration of the happiness which they two had enjoyed together, he adds at last, that he thought it no disparagement to those qualifications of their life, that, in the midst of the most talked-of and talking country in the world, they had lived so long,

not only without fame, but almost without being heard of. And yet, within a few years afterwards, there were no two names of men more known, or more generally celebrated. If we engage into a large acquaintance, and various familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of most of our time: we expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinence, which would make a wise man tremble to think of. Now, as for being known much by sight, and pointed at, I cannot comprehend the honour that lies in that. Whatsoever it be, every mountebank has it more than the best orator, and the hangman more than the Lord Chief Justice of a city. Every creature has it, both of nature and art, if it be anyways extraordinary. It was as often said, This is that Bucephalus, or This is that Incitatus, when they were led prancing through the streets, as This is that Alexander, or This is that Domitian; and truly for the latter, I take Incitatus to have been a much more honourable beast than his master, and more deserving the consulship than he the empire.

"I love and commend a true, good fame, because it is the shadow of virtue; not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but it is an efficacious shadow, and like that of St. Peter, cures the diseases of others. The best kind of glory, no doubt is that which is reflected from honesty, such as was the glory of Cato and Aristides; but it was

painful to them both and is seldom beneficial to any man while he lives. What it is to him after his death I cannot say, because I love not philosophy merely notional and conjectural, and no man who has made the experiment has been so kind as to come back to inform us. Upon the whole matter, I account a person who has a moderate mind and fortune, and lives in the conversation of two or three agreeable friends with little commerce in the world besides, who is esteemed well enough by his few neighbours that know him, and is truly irreproachable by anybody; and so after a healthful quiet life before the great inconveniences of old age, goes more silently out of it than he came in (for I would not have him so much as cry in his exit); this innocent deceiver of the world, as Horace calls him, this *muta persona*, I take to have been more happy in his part than the greatest actors that fill the stage with show and noise, nay even than Augustus himself, who asked with his last breath whether 'he had not played his farce very well.'"

We find another graceful bit of autobiography in an Essay addressed to Evelyn, and called "The Garden:"

"I never had any other desire so strong and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the

remainder of my life only to the culture of them and study of nature;

"And there, (with no design beyond my wall) whole and entire to lie,
In no unactive ease and no unglorious poverty;

or, as Virgil has said, shorter and better for me, that I might there

"'Studiis florere ignobilis oti.'

"(Although I could wish that he had rather said, 'nobilis oti,' when he spoke of his own). But several accidents of my ill-fortune have disappointed me hitherto, and do still of that felicity; for though I have made the first and hardest step to it by abandoning all ambitions and hopes in this world, and by retiring from the noise of all business, and almost company, yet I stick still in the inn of a hired house and garden amongst weeds and rubbish; and without that pleasantest work of human industry, the improvement of something which we call (not very properly, but yet we call) our own. I am gone out from Sodom, but I am not yet arrived at my little Zoar. O let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. I do not look back yet, but I have been forced to stop and make too many halts. You

may wonder, Sir, (for this seems a little too extravagant and pindarical for prose), what I mean by all this preface; it is to let you know that though I have missed, like a chemist, my great end, yet I account my affections and endeavours well rewarded by something that I have met with, by the bye, which is, that they have procured to me some part in your kindness and esteem."

Here is a fine passage from the Essay "Of Solitude:"

* * * "Happy had it been for Hannibal, if adversity could have taught him as much wisdom as was learnt by Scipio from the highest prosperities. This would be no wonder, if it were as truly as it is colourably and wittily said by Monsieur de Montaigne, 'That ambition itself might teach us to love solitude; there is nothing that does so much hate to have companions.' It is true it loves to have its elbows free; it detests to have company on either side; but it delights, above all things, in a train behind, ay, and a cheer too before it. And the greatest part of men are so far from the opinion of that noble Roman, that if they chance to be at any time without company they are like a becalmed ship; they never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal."

The whole Essay "Of Liberty" is full of the happiest adaptations of classical examples to Cowley's

peculiar views. He speedily dismisses the public side of the question, and enlarges on the slavery to which ambitious men (Catiline unfortunate in his ambition, Cæsar prosperous) voluntary subject themselves in the pursuit of their object. There are in this eloquent discourse many felicitous translations from Cicero and Sallust, which taken with the specimens of Anacreon (which my readers will find further on), may lead us to lament deeply that in that age of translators, Cowley did not devote his cherished leisure to versions of some of the great masters of antiquity, especially the orators and historians.

I prefer however to give an extract from the curious fragment which he has entitled "On the Government of Oliver Cromwell;" a strange vision, of which the whole tenor is strongly against the Great Protector, but into the midst of which, put it is true, into the mouth of a bad angel, the following character of Cromwell is introduced as if by an instinct of truth and candour which the writer found it impossible to resist. Hume has inserted this character "altered," as he says, "in some particulars," in his history. Why altered? The Scottish historian is a most clear and pleasant narrator, but surely he does not pretend to improve Cowley's prose. I give it from the original. The spokesman is the evil angel:

"And pray, countryman," said he, very kindly and

very flatteringly, "for I would not have you fall into the general error of the world, that detests and decries so extraordinary a virtue, what can be more extraordinary than that a person of mean birth, no fortune, no eminent qualities of body, which have sometimes, or of mind which have often, raised men to the highest dignities, should have the courage to attempt, and the happiness to succeed in so improbable a design as the destruction of one of the most ancient and most solidly-founded monarchies upon the earth? that he should have the power or boldness to put his Prince and master to an open and infamous death; to banish that numerous and strongly-allied family; to do all this under the name and wages of a Parliament; to trample upon them too as he pleased, and spurn them out of doors when he grew weary of them; to raise up a new and unheard-of monster out of their ashes; to stifle that in the very infancy, and set up himself above all things that ever were called Sovereigns in England; to oppress all his enemies by arms, and all his friends afterwards by artifice; to serve all parties patiently for awhile, and to command them victoriously at last; to overrun each corner of the three nations, and overcome with equal facility both the riches of the south and the poverty of the north; to be feared and courted by all foreign princes, and adopted a brother to the gods of the earth; to call together Parliaments with a word of

his pen, and scatter them again with the breath of his mouth; to be hourly and daily petitioned that he would please to be hired at the rate of two millions a-year to be the master of those who had hired him before to be their servant; to have the estates and lives of three kingdoms as much at his disposal as was the little inheritance of his father, and to be as noble and liberal in the spending of them; and lastly (for there is no end of all the particulars of his glory), to bequeath all this with one word to his posterity; to die with peace at home and triumph abroad; to be buried among kings and with more than regal solemnity, and to leave a name behind him not to be extinguished but with the whole world; which as it is now too little for his praises, so it might have been too for his conquests, if the short time of his human life could have been stretched out to the extent of his immortal design."

Such is Cowley as a prose writer. And yet one of the most accomplished persons whom I have ever known assured me the other day that, excepting amongst a few men of very refined taste, he believed the Essays to be little read. They will rise in demand soon I hope, for my friend Mr. Willmott, a writer deservedly popular, has praised them in one of his charming volumes just as they ought to be praised. It would be difficult to say more.

The poems are singularly unequal. But as I for my own private recreation am wont to resort to

such innocent gaieties as the fathers of song have bequeathed to us, so I seldom fail to present them to my readers; and it happens that this philosopher, whom we have seen dealing with high and lofty thoughts, descanting like a hermit on the joys of solitude and the delights of the country,—and in this respect his odes are nothing inferior to his Essays;—it happens that this identical Cowley hath left behind him the pleasantest of all pleasant ballads, which could hardly have been produced by any one except a thorough man of the world. It is entitled "The Chronicle," and contains a catalogue of all the fair ladies with whom he had at different times been enamoured. Never was list more amusing. It abounds in happy traits,—especially the one, which tells to half an hour how long a silly beauty may hope to retain the heart of a man of sense. The expression when the haughty Isabella, unconscious of her conquest, and marching on to fresh triumphs, beats out Susan "by the bye," has passed into one of those proverbs, of which doubtless as of many other by-words, they who use them little guess the origin.

"The Chronicle" was written two hundred years ago. Ladies, dear ladies, if one could be sure that no man would open this book, if we were all together in (female) parliament assembled, without a single male creature within hearing, might we not

acknowledge that the sex, especially that part of it formerly called coquette, and now known by the name of flirt, is very little altered since the days of the Merry Monarch? and that a similar list compiled by some gay bachelor of Belgravia might, allowing for differences of custom and of costume, serve very well as a companion to Master Cowley's catalogue? I would not have a man read this admission for the world:

THE CHRONICLE. A BALLAD.

Margarita first possessed,
If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when awhile the wanton maid,
With my restless heart had played,
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign,
To the beauteous Catherine:
Beauteous Catherine gave place,
(Though loath and angry she to part
With the possession of my heart,)
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza to this hour might reign,
Had she not evil counsels ta'en;
Fundamental laws she broke,
And still new favourites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,
Both to reign at once began;
Alternately they swayed,
And sometimes Mary was the fair,
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And sometimes both, I obeyed.

Another Mary then arose,
Who did rigorous laws impose,
A mighty tyrant she!
Long, alas! should I have been
Under that iron-sceptred queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,
'Twas then a golden time with me,
But soon those pleasures fled;
For the gracious princess died,
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month three days and half an hour,
Judith held the sovereign power:
Wondrous beautiful her face,
But so weak and small her wit,
That she to govern was unfit,
And so Susannah took her place.

But when Isabella came,
Armed with a resistless flame;
By the artillery of her eye,
Whilst she proudly marched about,
Greater conquests to find out,
She beat out Susan, by the bye.

But in her place, I then obeyed
Black-eyed Bess her viceroy-maid,
To whom ensued a vacancy.
Thousand worse passions then possessed,
The interregnum of my breast,—
Bless me from such an anarchy!

Gentle Henrietta then,
And a third Mary next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,
And then a pretty Thomasine,
And then another Catherine,
And then a long et cetera.

But should I now to you relate,
The strength and riches of their state,
The powder, patches, and the pins,
The ribands, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines.

If I should tell the politic arts,
To take and keep men's hearts,
The letters, embassies and spies,
The frowns, the smiles, and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
Numberless, nameless mysteries!

And all the little lime-twigs laid,
By Machiavel the waiting-maid;
I more voluminous should grow,
Chiefly if I, like them should tell
All change of weather that befel,
Than Hollinshed or Stowe.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me.
A higher and a nobler strain
My present empress doth claim,
Heleonora first o' the name,
Whom God grant long to reign!

I add a few original stanzas, which show Cowley's characteristic merits and defects;—very few, since I must find room for some of those translations from Anacreon, which for grace, spirit and delicacy, will never be surpassed.

OF SOLITUDE.

Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good!
Hail, ye plebeian underwood!
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests and plenteous food,
Pay with their grateful voice.

* * * *

Here let me careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me flying;
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
Nor be myself, too, mute.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near,
Gilt with the sunbeams here and there,
On whose enamelled bank I'll walk,
And see how prettily they smile,
And hear how prettily they talk.

Ah! wretched and too solitary he,
Who loves not his own company!
He'll feel the weight of it many a day,
Unless he call in sin or vanity,
To help to bear it away.

* * * *

THE GRASSHOPPER.

From Anacreon.

Happy insect! what can be
In happiness compared to thee?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup doth fill;
'Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,
Nature's self, thy Ganymede.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
Happier than the happiest king!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee;
All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice,
Man for thee doth sow and plough,
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou dost innocently joy,
Nor dost thy luxury destroy.
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year!
Thee Phœbus loves and doth inspire;
Phœbus is himself thy sire.

To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect! happy thou,
Dost neither age nor winter know;
But when thou'st drunk, and danced, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
(Voluptuous and wise withal,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

DRINKING.

From Anacreon.

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks and gapes for drink again;
The plants suck in the earth, and are
With constant drinking fresh and fair;
The sea itself, which one would think,
Should have but little need of drink,
Drinks ten thousand rivers up,
So filled that they o'erflow the cup.
The busy sun, and one would guess
By's drunken fiery face, no less,
Drinks up the sea, and when he's done,
The moon and stars drink up the sun.
They drink and dance by their own light,
They drink and revel all the night.
Nothing in nature's sober found,
But an eternal health goes round.
Fill up the bowl then, fill it high!
Fill all the glasses there! for why
Should every creature drink but I?
Why, men of mortals, tell me why?

GOLD.

From Anacreon.

A mighty pain to love it is,
And 'tis a pain that pain to miss:
But of all pain the greatest pain,
It is to love, and love in vain.
Virtue now nor noble blood,
Nor wit by love is understood,
Gold alone does passion move,
Gold monopolises love!
A curse on her, and on the man,
Who this traffic first began!
A curse on him who found the ore!
A curse on him who digged the store!
A curse on him who did refine it!
A curse on him who first did coin it!
A curse, all curses else above,
On him who used it first in love!
Gold begets in brethren hate;
Gold in families debate;
Gold doth friendship separate;
Gold doth civil wars create;
These the smallest harms of it!
Gold, alas! does love beget.

I cannot conclude without a word of detestation towards Sprat, who, Goth and Vandal that he was, destroyed Cowley's familiar letters.

V.

COMIC POETS.

J. ANSTEY.

My acquaintance with "The Pleader's Guide" commenced some five-and-forty years ago, after the following fashion.

It had happened to me to make one of a large Christmas party in a large country mansion, the ladies whereof were assembled one morning dolefully enough in an elegant drawing-room. It was what sportsmen are pleased to call "a fine open day;" which, being interpreted according to the feminine version, means every variety of bad weather of which our climate is capable, excepting frost. Dirt, intolerable dirt, it always means, and rain pretty often. On the morning in question, it did not absolutely rain, it only mizzled; but the clouds hung over our heads in a leaden canopy, threaten-

ing a down pour; and all the signs of the earth testified to the foregone deluge that had already confined us to the house until our patience was worn to a thread. Heavy drops fell from the eaves, the trees in the park were dripping from every bough, the fallen leaves under the trees dank with moisture, the grass as wet as if it grew in a ford, the gravel walks soft and plashy, the carriage drives no better than mud. In short it was the very dismallest weather that ever answered to the name of "a fine open day;" and our sportsmen accordingly had all sallied forth to enjoy it, some to join Sir John's hounds, some to a great coursing meeting at Streatley.

As we stood at the windows bemoaning our imprisonment, we saw that the drizzle was fast settling into steady rain, and that there was no more chance of a ride on horseback, or a drive in an open carriage, than of the exhilarating walk which is the proper exercise of Christmas. All the pets about the park sympathised in our afflictions. The deer dropped off to their closest covert; the pied peacock, usually so stately and so dignified as he trailed his spotted train after him, when he came to the terrace to tap at the window for his dole of cake, actually sneaked away, when summoned, in pure shame at his draggled tail; the swans looked wet through. The whole party seemed chilled and dismal, and I was secretly

meditating a retreat to my mother's dressing-room, to enjoy in quiet a certain volume of "Causes Célèbres," which I had abstracted from the library for my own private solace, when everybody was startled by a proposal of the only gentleman left at home; a young barrister, who had had sufficient courage to confess his indifference to field sports, and who now, observing on the *ennui* that seemed to have seized upon the party, offered to use his best efforts to enliven us by reading aloud—by reading a law-book. Fancy the exclamations at a medicine so singularly ill-adapted to the disease! For my own part, I was not so much astonished. I suspected that the young gentleman had got hold of another volume of my dearly beloved "Causes Célèbres," and was about to minister to our discontent by reading a French Trial. But the rest of the party laughed and exclaimed, and were already so much aroused by the proposal, that the cure might be said to be more than half accomplished, before our learned teacher opened the pages of "The Pleader's Guide."

I wish I could communicate to my extracts the zest that his selections derived from his admirable reading, and from the humorous manner in which he expounded the mystery of the legal phrases, which I shall do my best to avoid, not to overtask my reader's ingenuity.

It is an old lawyer instructing a young one:

"But chiefly thou, dear Job, my friend,
My kinsman, to my verse attend;
By education formed to shine
Conspicuous in the pleading line;
For you, from five years old to twenty,
Were crammed with Latin words in plenty;
Were bound apprentice to the Muses,
And forced with hard words, blows, and bruises
To labour on poetic ground,
Dactyls and spondees to confound;
And when become in fictions wise,
In Pagan histories and lies,
Were sent to dive at Granta's cells,
For truth in dialectic wells;
There duly bound for four years more,
To ply the philosophic oar,
Points metaphysical to moot,
Chop logic, wrangle, and dispute;
And now, by far the most ambitious
Of all the sons of Bergersdicius,
Present the law with all the knowledge
You gathered both at school and college,
Still bent on adding to your store
The graces of a Pleader's lore,
And, better to improve your taste,
Are by your parents' fondness placed
Among the blest, the chosen few,
(Blest if their happiness they knew),
Who, for three hundred guineas paid
To some great master of the trade,

Have, at his rooms, by special favour,
His leave to use their best endeavour,
By drawing pleas from nine till four,
To earn him twice three hundred more;
And after dinner may repair
To 'foresaid rooms, and then and there
Have 'foresaid leave from five till ten,
To draw the aforesaid pleas again."

Then he favours his pupil with a bit of his own history, which seems to me capital:—

"Whoe'er has drawn a special plea,
Has heard of old Tom Tewksbury;
Deaf as a post and thick as mustard,
He aimed at wit, and bawled and blustered,
And died a *Nisi prius* leader—
That genius was my special pleader.
That great man's office I attended,
By Hawk and Buzzard recommended;
Attorneys both of wondrous skill
To pluck the goose and drive the quill.
Three years I sat his smoky room in,
Pens, paper, pounce and ink consuming;
The fourth, when Essoign day began,
Joyful I hailed the auspicious sun,
Bade Tewksbury and clerk adieu;
*Purification Eighty-two,
Of both I washed my hands; and though
With nothing for my cash to show
But precedents, so scrawled and blurred
I scarce could read one single word,

* The Purification of the Virgin Mary is one of the return days of Hilary Term.

Nor in my book of common-place
One feature of the law could trace,
Save Buzzard's nose and visage thin,
And Hawk's deficiency of chin,
Which I, while lolling at my ease,
Was wont to draw instead of pleas;
Yet chambers I equipt complete,
Hired books, made friends, and gave to eat.
If, haply, to regale my friends on,
My mother sent a haunch of ven'son,
I most respectfully entreated
The choicest company to eat it;
To wit, old Buzzard, Hawk, and Crow,
Item Tom Thornback, Shark, and Co.,
Attorneys all, as keen and staunch
As e'er devoured a client's haunch;
Nor did I not their clerks invite
To taste said venison hashed at night;
For well I knew that hopeful fry
My rising merit would descry,
The same litigious course pursue,
And, when to fish of prey they grew,
By love of food and contest led,
Would haunt the spot where once they fed.
Thus having with due circumspection
Formed my professional connexion,
My desk with precedents I strewed,
Turned critic, danced, or penned an ode,
Studied the *ton*, became a free
And easy man of gallantry;
But if, while capering at my glass,
Or toying with some favourite lass,
I heard the aforesaid Hawk a-coming,
Or Buzzard on the staircase humming,

At once the fair angelic maid
Into my coalhole I conveyed;
At once, with serious looks profound,
And eyes commercing with the ground,
I seemed as one estranged to sleep,
And fixed, in cogitation deep,
Sate motionless; whilst in my hand I
Held my Doctrina Placitandi.
And though I never read a page in't,
Thanks to that shrewd well-judging agent,
My sister's husband, Mr. Shark,
Soon got six pupils and a clerk.
Five pupils were my stint, the other
I took to compliment his mother."

This piece of autobiography seems to me admirable for its neatness and point, its humour and its good-humour. The termination of the poem is a trial of matchless pleasantry between John-a-Gull and John-a-Gudgeon, for an assault at an election. I transcribe the commencement and part of the opening speech, a piece of legal comedy which will make its way even with the least learned reader:—

THE TRIAL.*

JOHN-A-GULL, at st. JOHN-A-GUDGEON. } In Trespass.

For the *Plaintiff*, Mr. Counsellor BOTHER'UM.—For the *Defendant*, Mr. Counsellor BORE'UM.—Mr. BOTHER'UM opens the pleadings. His speech at length.

"I rise with pleasure, I assure ye,
With transport to accost a jury,

As taken by an eminent short-hand writer.

Of your known conscientious feeling,
Candour and honourable dealing.
From Middlesex* discreetly chosen,
(A worthy and an upright dozen). [*Aside.*
This action, gentlemen, is brought,
By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort—"

Our French will serve us for the legal word which is, I suppose, old Norman French, pronounced English-wise, but signifying a wrong, as one might guess from the modern tongue.

"By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort;
The pleadings state 'that John-a-Gull,
With envy wrath and malice full,
With swords, knives, sticks, staves, fist and bludgeon,
Beat, bruised, and wounded John-a-Gudgeon.'"

This prodigious accumulation of weapons, as well as the "twelvs pots, twelve mugs," and so forth, to which we are coming, is an imitation of the real law fictions and endless repetitions which result from the circumstances of nothing being allowed to be proven at a trial that has not been named in the indictment, whereas there is no rule to compel the proof of more than the counsel think essential to the case; it is, therefore, really usual to provide against all contingencies by enumerating far more

* Middlesex. This being an election affray, the venue is supposed to have been changed upon the usual affidavit, for the sake of a more fair and impartial trial before a Middlesex jury.

particulars than are likely to be brought forward. Lawyers will best feel the satire, but all can enjoy the fun:

"First count's for that with divers jugs,
To wit, twelve pots, twelve cups, twelve mugs,
Of certain vulgar drink, called toddy,
Said Gull did sluice said Gudgeon's body.
The second count's for other toddy,
Thrown by said Gull on Gudgeon's body;
To wit, his gold-laced hat and hair on,
And clothes which he had then and there on;
To wit, twelve jackets, twelve surtouts,
Twelve pantaloons, twelve pair of boots,
Which did thereby much discompose
Said Gudgeon's mouth, eyes, ears, and nose,
Back, stomach, neck, thighs, feet, and toes;
By which and other wrongs unheard of,
His clothes were spoilt and life despaired of.
To all these counts the plea I find,
Is son assault and issue joined."

Here our French helps us again, and the common expression of joining issue. Now for Counsellor Bother'um's history of the battle. The watery names are very happy:

"Such, gentlemen, is word for word,
The story told on this record.
The fray was at a feast or revel,
At Toadland, on the Bedford Level,
Given, as was usual at elections,
By Gudgeon to his Fen connections.

They'd had a meeting at the 'Swan'
The day before the poll began,
And hence adjourned it to make merry
With Mr. Coot, who keeps the 'Ferry.'
Now John-a-Gull, who thrusts his nose
Wherever John-a-Gudgeon goes,
To this same feast, without suspicion,
Unasked, it seems, had gained admission.
Coot had just finished an oration,
And Gudgeon, with much approbation,
Was singing an election ballad,
Penned by ingenious Dr. Mallard,
(That orthodox and learned writer,
Who bids so fairly for a mitre;)
When Gull, who heard this song or sonnet,
With Mr. Gudgeon's comments on it;
This Gull, whose very name denoted
The character for whom he voted,
Flourished his knuckles in derision,
And, with much promptness of decision,
Began to pummel and belabour
The short ribs of his peaceful neighbour;
But first with tweaks assailed his nose,
And interspersed said tweaks with blows.
Gudgeon explained, and Gull recourse had
To other tweaks like tweak aforesaid.
Heaven knows a milder gentler creature
Never was seen in human nature
Than the forbearing and well-judging,
Discreet and gentle John-a-Gudgeon!
And, gentlemen, there's no man's face is
Better received at all your races,
Wells, mouths and water-drinking places;

Was alderman and mayor elect,
Once had the honour to be pricked
For sheriff, which important station
He gained without solicitation.
No doubt his lordship recognises
The coat he had on at assizes,
A velveret, genteel and neat,
With tabby lined and frogs complete,
Made for Squire Gudgeon's wedding ball,
When first he came to Webfoot Hall,
An ancient seat in the Isle of Ely,
Where all the Gudgeons live genteelly;
Which coat so trimmed, so frogged, said Gull
Did spoil, besmear, and disannul
With the most villanous libations
Of the most vile of vile potations;
For proof we'll call Gull's worthy friend,
Who keeps a school at Toadland's end;
One Simon Trout, a pious pastor,
And Dr. Tench, who spread the plaister;
And Farmer Chubb, an honest yeoman,
Who speaks the truth and cares for no man;
But above all, to prove our case,
We'll show you Mr. Gudgeon's face,
Where every injured feature pleads
'Gainst John-o-Gull's atrocious deeds.
What facts, what species of excuse,
My brother Bore'um will produce,
What case he'll make, and how maintain
His plea of son assault demesne,
Wise as he looks, you may rely on't,
He knows no more than his own client.
'Tis for you, gentlemen, to say
What damage John-a-Gull should pay;

'Tis in your wisdom, gentlemen, to pull
So wide the purse-strings of this factious Gull,
That he no more may triumph and parade
The streets of Cambridge in a blue cockade," &c. &c.

Here follows a grand and solemn peroration, such as may often be heard in a court of justice, and read in the "Times."

Then comes a most graphic and dramatic examination of witnesses. Simon Trout, dissenting minister and schoolmaster, is examined by Mr. Bother'um, and cross-examined by Mr. Bore'um. At first Mr. Trout *will* speak according to hearsay, what Chubb told him, and Tench; there is no keeping him to what he himself heard and saw, and Bother'um and Bore'um wrangle over him accordingly. At last, in the middle of much rambling, he swears point blank to the assault committed by Gull, and then Bother'um, feeling him to be a dangerous witness, says:

Both. Come, Sir, we don't detain you. Gull,
You're sure, smote Gudgeon on the skull?
Trout. He did.
Bore. Stay, Mr. What dy'e-call'em,
You say you saw Gull bruise and maul him?
Trout. Yes.
Bore. And you never go to dinners
To feast with publicans and sinners!
What! was the bludgeon pretty thick?
Trout. I cannot say I saw the stick.
Bore. Stay, Sir, I think that you're a teacher!

and so forth; and, in a dexterous cross-examination, he extorts the admission that there had been some provocation, and that it merged into a regular fight. Then we have the medical witness, Dr. Tench, surgeon and apothecary, admirably technical, translating the commonest words into Latin;

> "The fauces in a sad condition,
> Between the nares no partition."

(The result of the two tweaks)

> "But both so joined into conjunction,
> The olfactories declined their function;
> Some teeth were broke, and some were lost.
> The incisores suffered most;
> Much mischief done to the molares—
> And what a very strange affair is,
> Not the least symptom could I see
> Of dentes sapientiæ."

The Doctor is dismissed, and Farmer Chubb appears, at first a stolid stupid witness, from whom it is difficult to extort a word, and who has a mind to break away:

> "My lord I wishes to be going,
> For 'tis a charming time for sowing."

(Lent assizes, I presume!)

> *Both.* Stay, Mr. Chubb; speak out, Sir, do!
> Did Gull beat Gudgeon? Is that true?
> *Chubb.* Beat him! He beat him black and blue.
> I never see'd a prettier fight,
> So full of malice like, and spite.

Bore. A fight! Ho! ho! the truth's come out,
A fair set-to—a boxing bout?
Both. And this you positively swear?
Chubb. Ay, sure; why Simon Trout was there.

And then it appears that the schoolmaster had done all he could to promote the fray, and had endeavoured to persuade Chubb to act as bottle-holder to one of the parties. Chubb is dismissed, and Bore'um makes a most characteristic defence—cites half-a-dozen books—upon which Botherum cites somewhere about a score; they hurl argument against argument, case against case, and get into a prodigious fury. Bore'um vows:

"If all that I've advanced this day
Be not good law, my lord, and sound
As e'er was broached on legal ground,
Soon as to chambers I return
All my black-letter books I'll burn."—
"Hold, hold," (quoth Bother'um) "'twould be cruel
To turn your fixtures into fuel,
Those precious tomes with cobwebs spread,
Which sleep so peaceful o'er your head;
Ere yet that sentence is decreed 'em,
Do read 'em, Master Bore'um, read 'em!"

After which piece of malice both parties suddenly cool down.

Both lovingly agreed at once to draw
A special case, and save the point in law,
That so the battle, neither lost or won,
Continued, ended, and again begun,

Might still survive, and other suits succeed
For future heroes of the gown to lead,
And future bards in loftier verse to plead.

Although I am copying from the sixth edition this pleasant poem is now so scarce, that after a long search in London, I fairly gave up all hopes of succeeding, and only obtained the volume at Bath, the birth-place of the author, who was the son of Christopher Anstey, the well-known writer of the Bath Guide.

The law of this book is said to be excellent. It is recorded of I know not what great legal luminary, that the only poem he ever read in the course of his life was "The Pleader's Guide," and that he had the triumph and satisfaction of discovering a flaw therein.

VI.

AMERICAN POETS.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE representatives of the Anglo-Saxon race across the Atlantic—our cousins I do not know how many degrees removed—have in no way better proved their kindred than by the growing pith and substance of their literature. Of such prose writers as Channing, Norton, Prescott, Ware, Cooper, and Washington Irving, together with the many who, where there are such leaders, are sure to press close upon their footsteps, any country might be proud. But one want they had; and although not particularly fond of pleading guilty to deficiencies of any sort, they confessed it themselves: the want of a great poet. Of elegant versifiers there was no lack. I doubt if, for the fifty years that preceded the first French Revolution, England herself had been better

off in the way of smooth and polished rhyme. But they are an ambitious race these transatlantic kinsmen of ours, commonly called Americans; they like to have the best that can be obtained in every department, and they do not dislike to vaunt of their possessions; and now that their great literary want is supplied in the person of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, they may glorify themselves to their heart's content, certain that every lover of poetry, whether born under the red-cross banner of Queen Victoria, or the stripes and stars of the States, will join the general All Hail!

I do not know a more enviable reputation than Professor Longfellow has won for himself in this country—won too with a rapidity seldom experienced by our own native poets. The terseness of diction and force of thought delight the old; the grace and melody enchant the young; the unaffected and all pervading piety satisfy the serious; and a certain slight touch of mysticism carries the imaginative reader fairly off his feet. For my own part, I confess, not only to the being captivated by all these qualities (mysticism excepted), but to the farther fact of yielding to the charm of certain lines, I cannot very well tell why, and walking about the house repeating to myself such figments as this:

"I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars,"

as if I were still eighteen. I am not sure that this is not as great a proof of the power of the poet as can be given.

In speaking of Professor Longfellow's popularity in England, I refer chiefly to the smaller pieces, which form, however, the larger portion of his collected works. The "Spanish Student," although beautifully written, is too little dramatic, and above all, too Spanish for our national taste; and "Evangeline," with its experiments in English versification, and its strange union of a semi-ideal passion with the most real and positive of all Dutch painting, must be regarded as still upon its trial.

The shorter poems are enough. I would fain have enriched my pages with the "Excelsior" and the "Psalm of Life," but they have been long enough printed to have found their way to many hearths and hearts. I prefer, therefore, quoting from the later volumes, which have only recently become known in England, although I could not resist the temptation of inserting the noble tribute to the painter and the bard, which makes the glory of the stirring lyric on Nuremberg.

NUREMBERG.

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg the ancient stands.

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round them throng;

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old;

And thy brave and thrifty burgers boasted, in their uncouth rhyme,
That their great imperial city stretched its hand through every clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an iron band,
Stands the mighty linden, planted by Queen Cunigunda's hand:

On the square the oriel window, where in old heroic days
Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous world of art—
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing in the common mart;

And above cathedral doorways, saints and bishops carved in stone,
By a former age commissioned as apostles to our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust:

In the church of Sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare,
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through the painted air.

Here, when art was still religion, with a simple reverent heart,
Lived and laboured Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art.

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies;
Dead he is not—but departed—for the artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal lanes
Walked of yore the Master-Singers, chanting rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs came they to the friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters in huge folios sung and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a nicely sanded floor,
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song,
As the old man, grey and dove-like, with his great beard white and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown his cark and care,
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendour, and before my dreamy eye
Wave these mingling shapes and figures, like a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers win for thee the world's regard,
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs thy cobbler-bard.

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Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far away,
As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in thought his careless lay;

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret of the soil,
The nobility of labour, the long pedigree of toil.

THE OPEN WINDOW.

The old house by the lindens
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery window
Wide open to the air;
But the faces of the children
They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog
Was standing by the door;
He looked for his little playmates
Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
They played not in the hall;
But shadow and silence and sadness
Were hanging over all.

The birds sung in the branches,
With sweet familiar tone;
But the voices of the children
Will be heard in dreams alone!

And the boy that walked beside me
He could not understand
Why closer in mine,—ah, closer!—
I pressed his warm soft hand!

The charming touch in the last stanza has a pathos peculiar to Professor Longfellow. The next poem is also one which, if printed anonymously, we should I think be ready to assign to the right author.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

L'éternité est une pendule, dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement, dans le silence des tombeaux: Toujours—jamais! Jamais—toujours!—JACQUES BRIDAINE.

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;
And from its station in the hall
An ancient time-piece says to all:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
As if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning time-piece never ceased:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

There groups of merry children played;
There youths and maidens, dreaming, strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold
Those hours the ancient time-piece told:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding-night!
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow!
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask with throbs of pain,
Ah! when shall they all meet again
As in the days long since gone by?
The ancient time-piece makes reply!
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain and care,
And death and time shall disappear!
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly:
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

TWILIGHT.

The twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And, like the wings of sea-birds,
Flash the wild caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And a little face at the window
Peers out into the night.

Close, close it is pressed to the window,
As if those childish eyes
Were looking into the darkness,
To see some form arise.

And a woman's waving shadow
  Is passing to and fro,
Now rising to the ceiling,
  Now bowing and bending low,

What tale do the roaring ocean,
  And the night-wind bleak and wild,
As they beat at the crazy casement,
  Tell to that little child?

And why do the roaring ocean
  And the night-wind wild and bleak,
As they beat at the heart of the mother,
  Drive the colour from her cheek?

RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
  But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howso'er defended,
  But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying
  And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
  Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
  Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
  Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours
  Amid these earthly damps,

What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead, the child of our affection,
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day, we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her,
For when, with raptures wild,
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
But silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

I add one simile from the "Address to a Child:"

By what astrology of fear or hope
Dare I to cast thy horoscope!
Like the new moon thy life appears
A little strip of silver-light,
And, widening outward into night,
The shadowy disk of future years!
And yet, upon its outer rim,
A luminous circle faint and dim,
And scarcely visible to us here,
Rounds and completes the perfect sphere
A prophecy and intimation,
A pale and feeble adumbration,
Of the great world of light that lies
Beyond all human destinies!

The concluding extract has a stronger recommen-

dation than any that I can give; it is Mrs. Browning's favourite among the poems of Longfellow:

THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterwards, in an oak
I found the arrow still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again the heart of a friend.

I venture to add an anecdote new to the English public.

Professor Longfellow's residence at Cambridge, a picturesque old wooden house, has belonging to it the proudest historical associations of which America can boast: it was the head-quarters of Washington. One night the poet chanced to look out of his window, and saw by the vague starlight a figure riding slowly past the mansion. The face could not be distinguished; but the tall erect person, the cocked hat, the traditional costume, the often-described white horse, all were present. Slowly he paced before the house,

and then returned, and then again passed by, after which neither horse nor rider were seen or heard of.

Could it really be Washington? or was it some frolic-masquerader assuming his honoured form? For my part I hold firmly to the ghostly side of the story, so did my informant, also a poet and an American, and as worthy to behold the spectre of the illustrious warrior as Professor Longfellow himself. I can hardly say more.

VII.

AUTHORS SPRUNG FROM THE PEOPLE.

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

I REMEMBER saying one day to a woman of high genius that a mutual friend of hers and mine proposed to give a series of lectures on authors sprung from the people, from the masses as it is the fashion to say now-a-days, and her replying quickly: "Why all authors who are worth reading are sprung from the people;—it is the well-born who are the exceptions." And then she ran through a beadroll of great names from Chaucer to Burns: nevertheless this repartee was not quite right; not a whit more right than a repartee usually is; for the number of educated writers must always preponderate. But still the class of self-educated writers is large, increasingly large; and truthful biographies of such persons must always be amongst the most in-

teresting books in the world, as showing better than any other books the development and growth of individual minds.

Mr. Bamford's "Life of a Radical" and Mr. Somerville's account of his own career have much of this merit; but the most curious of all these memoirs both for the vicissitudes of the story and the indomitable character of the man, is the "Life of Thomas Holcroft," begun by himself and concluded by Hazlitt.

Of his strength of character no better evidence can be offered than that the first seventeen chapters were dictated by him during his last illness whilst he was in such a state that he was frequently obliged to pause several minutes between every word, and yet the events are as clearly narrated and the style is as lucid and as lively as if it had been written in his most vigorous day.

He was born in London in the winter of 1745; his father being by trade a shoemaker, but of a disposition so unsteady that he never could remain long in any place or at any occupation. Here is the account his son, a most dutiful and affectionate son who maintained him to his death, gives of these rambling propensities:

"Having been bred to an employment for which he was very ill-fitted, the habit that became most rooted in and most fatal to my father was a fickleness of disposition, a thorough persuasion after he

had tried one means of providing for himself and his family for a certain time, that he had discovered another far more profitable and secure. Steadiness of pursuit was a virtue at which he never could arrive; and I believe few men in the kingdom had in the course of their lives been the hucksters of so many small wares, or more enterprising dealers in articles of a halfpenny value.

"I should mention that to carry on these itinerant trades my father had begun with purchasing an ass, and bought more as he could; now and then increasing his store by the addition of a ragged pony or a worn-out weather-beaten Rozinante. In autumn he turned his attention to fruit and conveyed apples and pears in hampers from villages to market towns. The bad nourishment I met with, the cold and wretched manner in which I was clothed, and the excessive weariness I endured in following these animals day after day, and being obliged to drive creatures perhaps still more weary than myself, were miseries much too great, and loaded my little heart with sorrows far too poignant ever to be forgotten. By-roads and high-roads were alike to be traversed, but the former far the oftenest, for they were then almost innumerable, and the state of them in winter would hardly be believed at present.

"My father became by turns a collector and vender of rags, a hardwareman, a dealer in buttons,

buckles, and pewter spoons; in short, a trafficker in whatever could bring gain. But there was one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other, and which therefore I suppose he found the most lucrative, which was to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Stoke in Staffordshire, and to hawk it all through the north of England. Of all other travelling, this was the most continual, the most severe, and the most intolerable. * * *

"Towards Litchfield on the right lay Cannock heath and town, and adjoining to this heath on the left there were coal-pits situated in a remarkably heavy clay country. Desirous of employing his asses, yet averse to go himself, my father frequently sent me to these coal-pits to get a single ass loaded, and to drive him over the heath to Rugeley there to find a customer for my coals. The article was so cheap and so near that the profits could be but very small, yet they were something. Had the weather been fine when I was sent on these errands the task would not have been so difficult, nor the wonder so great; but at the time I was unfortunately sent there I have a perfect recollection of deep ruts, of cattle, both asses and horses, unable to drag their legs through the clay, and of carts and waggons that were set fast in it.

"One day my ass had passed safely through the clay-ruts and deep roads, and under my guidance had began to ascend a hill we had to cross on Can-

nock heath on our way to Rugeley. The wind was very high, though while we were on low ground I had never suspected its real force. But my apprehensions began to increase with our ascent, and when on the summit of the hill, nearly opposite to two clumps of trees which are pictured to my imagination as they stood there at that time, it blew gust after gust too powerful for the loaded animal to resist, and down it came. Through life I have always had a strong sense of the grief and utter despair I then felt. But what a little surprises me is that I have no recollection whatever of the means by which I found relief, but rather of the naked and desolate place in which I was, and my inability to help myself. Could I have unloaded the ass it would not have been much matter, but the coals were brought from the pits in such masses that three of them were generally an ass-load, any one of which was usually beyond my strength. I have no doubt however but I got them by some means or other to Rugeley, and brought the money for them to my father, whom I could not help secretly accusing of insensibility, though that was the very reverse of his character.

"The coal-pits were situated on the extremity of an old forest inhabited by large quantities of red deer. At these I always stopped to look; but what inspired and delighted me most was the noble stag, for to him the deer appeared insignificant. Him I

often saw bounding along, eyeing objects without fear, and making prodigious leaps over obstacles that opposed his passage. In this free state, indeed, he cannot but excite our admiration.

"One little anecdote I must not omit. The reader will naturally suppose that from the time I began to travel the country with my father and mother I had little leisure or opportunity to acquire any knowledge by reading. I was too much pressed by fatigue, hunger, cold, and nakedness. Still, however, I cannot but suppose, as well from my own propensity to obey the will of God as from my father's wish to encourage my inclinations of this kind, that I continued to repeat my prayers and catechism morning and evening, and on Sundays to read the Prayer-book and Bible. At all events, I had not forgotten to read; for while we were at the house near Rugeley, by some means or other the song of 'Chevy Chase' came into my possession, which I read over with great delight at our fireside. My father, who knew that my memory was tolerably retentive, and saw the great number of stanzas the ballad contained, said to me, 'Well, Tom, can you get that song by heart?' To this question I very readily answered, 'Yes.' 'In how long a time?' 'Why, father, you know I have got such and such work for to-morrow, and what you will set me for the following days I can't tell; however, I can get it in three days.' 'What, perfectly?' 'Yes.' 'Well,

if you do that, I'll give you a halfpenny.' Rejoiced at my father's generosity, ' Oh, then, never fear,' said I. I scarcely need add that my task was easily accomplished, and that I then had the valuable sum of a halfpenny at my own disposal."

This way of life lasted until he was nine or ten years old; then came a spell of shoemaking and a violent attack of asthma, aggravated by the stooping position, which continued a year or two longer. The disease was at length removed by the skill of a country apothecary, and a fresh impulse was given to the poor boy's aspirations by the sight of a strongly-contested horse-race at Nottingham. His longings to be allowed to minister in some way to that noble animal became irrepressible; he confided them to his father, and was fortunate enough to be received into the service of a respectable man who kept a training stable near Newmarket. There being placed on a horse too spirited for his youth, his feebleness, and his inexperience, he got a terrible fall, and what he grieved for more, a dismissal. He was received by another trainer and dismissed again. At last he made a third application:

"It was no difficult matter to meet with John Watson: he was so attentive to stable hours, that, except on extraordinary occasions, he was always to be found. Being first careful to make myself look as like a stable-boy as I could, I came at the hour of four, and ventured to ask if I could see John

Watson. The immediate answer was in the affirmative. John Watson came, looked at me with a serious but good-natured countenance, and accosted me first with: 'Well, my lad, what is your business? I suppose I can guess; you want a place?' 'Yes, Sir.' 'Who have you lived with?' 'Mr. Woodcock, on the forest. One of your boys, Jack Clarke, brought me with him from Nottingham.' 'How came you to leave Mr. Woodcock?' 'I had a sad fall from an iron-grey filly, that almost killed me.' 'That is bad indeed. And so you left him?' 'He turned me away, Sir.' 'That is honest. I like your speaking the truth. So you are come from him to me?' At this question I cast my eyes down, and hesitated: then fearfully answered: 'No, Sir.' 'No! What, change masters twice in so short a time?' "I can't help it, Sir, if I am turned away.' This last answer made him smile."

So his character proving satisfactory, he is hired.

"My station was immediately assigned me. There was a remarkably quiet three years old colt lately from the discipline of the breaker, and of him I was ordered to take charge, instructed by one of the upper boys in everything that was to be done, and directed to back him and keep pace with the rest when they went out to exercise, only taking care to keep a straight line, and to walk, canter and gallop the last. * * * * I did not long ride a quiet colt at the tail of the string (on whose back

John Watson soon put a new comer), but had a dun horse, by no means a tame or safe one, committed to my care. I contrived to ride the dun horse through the winter. It was John Watson's general practice to exercise his horses over the flat, and up Cambridge Hill, on the west side of Newmarket; but the rule was not invariable. One wintry day he ordered us up to the Bury Hills. It mizzled a very sharp sleet, the wind became uncommonly cutting, and Dun, the horse I rode, being remarkable for a tender skin, found the wind and the sleet, which blew directly up his nostrils, so very painful, that it suddenly made him outrageous. He started from the rank in which he was walking, tried to unseat me, endeavoured to set off full speed; and when he found he could not master me so as to get head, began to rear, snorted most violently, threw out behind, plunged, and used every mischievous exertion of which the muscular powers of a blood-horse are susceptible. I, who felt the uneasiness he suffered before his violence began, being luckily prepared, sat him as steadily and upright as if this had been his usual exercise. John Watson was riding beside his horses, and a groom, I believe it was old Cheevers, broke out into an exclamation: 'I say, John, that is a fine lad!' 'Ay, ay,' replied Watson, highly satisfied, 'you will find some time or other that there are few in Newmarket that will match him.' To have behaved with true courage, and

to meet with applause like this, especially from John Watson, was a triumph such as I could at this time have felt in no other way with the same sweet satisfaction. My horsemanship had been seen by all the boys, my praises had been heard by them all. * * * *

"Horses, generally speaking, are of a generous and kindly nature. Of their friendly disposition towards their keepers, there is a trait known to every boy that has the care of one of them, which ought not to be omitted. The custom is to rise very early, even between two and three in the morning, when the days lengthen. In the course of the day horses and boys have much to do. About half-past eight, perhaps, in the evening, the horse has his last feed of oats, which he generally stands to enjoy in the centre of his smooth, carefully-made bed of clean long straw, and by the side of him the weary boy will often lie down, it being held as a maxim, a rule without exception, that were he to lie even till morning, the horse would never lie down himself, but stand still, careful to do his keeper no harm. * * * *

"Except by accident, the race-horse never trots. He must either walk or gallop; and in exercise, even when it is the hardest, the gallop begins slowly and gradually, and increases till the horse is nearly at full speed. When he has galloped half a mile, the boy begins to push him forward without relaxa-

tion for another half mile. This is at the period when the horses are in full exercise, to which they come by degrees. The boy that can best regulate these degrees among those of light weight is generally chosen to lead the gallop; that is, he goes first out of the stable and first returns.

"In the time of long exercise this is the first *brushing gallop*. A brushing gallop signifies that the horses are nearly at full speed before it is over, and it is commonly made at last rather up hill. Having all pulled up, the horses stand some two or three minutes and recover their wind; they then leisurely descend the hill and take a long walk, after which they are brought to water. But in this, as in everything else (at least as soon as long exercise begins), everything to them is measured. The boy counts the number of times the horse swallows when he drinks, and allows him to take no more gulps than the groom orders, the fewest to the hardest exercise, and one horse more or less than another, according to the judgment of the groom. After watering a gentle gallop is taken, and after that another walk of considerable length; to which succeeds the second and last brushing gallop, which is by far the most severe. When it is over, another pause, thoroughly to recover their wind, is allowed them; then a long walk is begun, the limits of which are prescribed, and it ends in directing their ride homeward.

"The morning's exercise often extends to four hours, and the evening's to much about the same time. * * * *

"In every stud of horses there are frequent changes; and as their qualities are discovered, one horse is rejected and sold, or perhaps a stranger bought and admitted. It happened on such an occasion that a little horse was brought us from another stud, whence he had been rejected for being unmanageable. He had shown himself restive, and besides the snaffle, was ridden in a check rein. I was immediately placed on his back, and what seemed rather more extraordinary, ordered to lead the gallop as usual. I do not know how it happened, but under me he showed very little disposition to become refractory, and whenever the humour occurred, it was soon overcome. That he was, however, watchful for an opportunity to do mischief, the following incident will discover. Our time for hard exercise had begun perhaps a fortnight or three weeks. As that proceeds the boys are less cautious, each having less suspicion of his horse. I was leading the gallop one morning, and had gone more than half the way towards the foot of Cambridge Hill, when something induced me to call and speak to a boy behind me, for which purpose I rather unseated myself, and as I looked back rested on my left thigh. The arch traitor no sooner felt the precarious seat I had taken, than he suddenly plunged

from the path, had his head between his legs, his heels in the air, and exerting all his power of bodily contortion, flung me from the saddle, with only one foot in the stirrup, and both my legs on the off-side. I immediately heard the whole set of boys behind shouting triumphantly: 'A calf, a calf!' a phrase of contempt for a boy that is thrown. Though the horse was then in the midst of his wild antics, and increasing his pace to full speed, as far as the tricks he was playing would permit, still, finding I had a foot in the stirrup, I replied to their shouts by a whisper to myself: 'It is no calf yet.' The horse took his usual course, turned up Cambridge Hill, and now rather increased his speed than his mischievous tricks. This opportunity I took, with that rashness of spirit which is peculiar to boys; and notwithstanding the prodigious speed and irregular motion of the horse, threw my left leg over the saddle. It was with the utmost difficulty that I could preserve my balance, but I did; though by this effort I lost hold of the reins, both my feet were out of the stirrup, and the horse for a moment was entirely his own master. But my grand object was gained—I was once more firmly seated, the reins and stirrups were recovered. In a twinkling the horse, instead of being pulled up, was urged to his utmost speed; and when he came to the end of the gallop, he stopped of himself with a very good will, as he was heartily breathed. The short exclamations of

the boys, at having witnessed what they thought an impossibility, were the gratifications I received, and the greatest perhaps that could be bestowed.

"I once saw an instance of what may be called the grandeur of alarm in a horse. In winter, during short exercise, I was returning one evening on the back of a hunter that was put in training for the Hunter's Plate. There had been some little rain, and the channel, always dry in summer, was then a small brook. As I must have rubbed his legs dry, if wetted, I gave him the rein, and made him leap the brook, which he understood as a challenge for play; and beginning to gambol, after a few antics, he reared very high, and plunging forward with great force alighted with his fore-feet on the edge of a deep gravel-pit, half-filled with water, so near that a very few inches farther he must have gone headlong down. His first astonishment and fear were so great, that he stood for some time breathless and motionless: then gradually recollecting himself, his back became curved, his ears erect, his hind and fore-legs in a position for sudden retreat; his nostrils, from an inward snort, burst into one loud expression of horror, and rearing on his hind-legs, he turned short round, expressing all the terrors he had felt by the utmost violence of plunging, kicking, and other bodily exertions. I was not quite so much frightened as he had been, but I was heartily glad when he became quiet again, that

the accident had been no worse. The only little misfortune I had was the loss of my cap, and being obliged to ride back some way, in order to recover it."

By this time young Holcroft was sixteen, and had begun to feel a craving for knowledge of a different nature from any that he could obtain at Newmarket; although even there he had contrived to read every book that came in his way, to perfect himself in arithmetic, and to acquire a scientific knowledge of vocal music, which was of great use to him in his after-career. He had made this progress, too, chiefly from his own efforts, so that the great process of self-instruction, which distinguished him through life was now begun; and he already knew enough to feel an ardent desire to know more. London, where his father was now living as a cobbler, offered at least the hope of education: accordingly to the great amazement and regret of good John Watson, who had been uniformly kind to him, and to whom he could hardly summon courage to announce his determination, he abandoned the field in which his success had been so encouraging, took leave of his companions, biped and quadruped, and made his way to the great city.

Here a long series of disappointments awaited him. He became, indeed, a skilful and rapid worker at the shoemaking trade; but the position and confinement disagreed with him (well they

might after the free seat on horseback, the exercise, and the pure air of Newmarket), and his habit of *idling his time in reading,* as the phrase goes, prevented his earning more than the bare necessaries of his abstemious life. He tried various schemes; taught an evening school; kept a day school somewhere in the country, with such indifferent success that he had but one pupil, and lived upon potatoes and buttermilk for three months; authorship, too, he tried in a small way, creeping into notice in the most obscure newspapers and the smallest magazines; and at about the age of twenty, when barely able to support himself, he married. It is to be noticed that throughout his whole life he was eminently a marrying man; having married three wives, and left a young widow, the daughter of Monsieur Mercier, author of the "Tableau de Paris." Shortly after his first marriage, of which we hear but little, although he was eminently kind and indulgent in his domestic character, he seems to have been induced, by his success in a sporting club, to try his fortune on the stage. He has left a characteristic account of his application to Foote.

"He had the good fortune to find the manager at breakfast with a young man, whom he employed partly on the stage, and partly as an amanuensis. 'Well,' said he, 'young gentleman, I guess your business by the sheepishness of your manner;

you have got the theatrical *cacoethes;* you have rubbed your shoulder against the scene: nay, is it not so?' Holcroft answered that it was. 'Well, and what great hero should you wish to personate? Hamlet, or Richard, or Othello, or who?' Holcroft replied that he distrusted his capacity for performing any that he had mentioned. 'Indeed!' said he, 'that's a wonderful sign of grace. I have been teased these many years by all the spouters in London, of which honourable fraternity I dare say you are a member; for I can perceive no stage varnish, none of your true strolling brass lacker on your face.' 'No, indeed, Sir.' 'I thought so. Well, Sir, I never saw a spouter before that did not want to surprise the town, in Pierre, or Lothario, or some character that demands all the address and every requisite of a master in the art. But, come, give us a touch of your quality—a speech. There's a youngster,' pointing to his secretary, 'will roar Jaffier against Pierre. Let the loudest take both.' Accordingly, he held the book, and at it they fell. The scene they chose was that of the before-mentioned characters in 'Venice Preserved.' For a little while after they began, it seems that Holcroft took the hint that Foote had thrown out, and restrained his wrath. But this appeared so insipid, and the ideas of rant and excellence were so strongly connected in his mind, that when Jaffier began to exalt his voice, he could no longer contain

himself; but, as Nic Bottom says, 'they both roared so, that it would have done your heart good to hear them.' Foote smiled, and after enduring this vigorous attack upon his organs of hearing as long as he was able, interrupted them.

"Far from discouraging our new beginner, he told him that with respect to giving the meaning of the words, he spoke much more correctly than he had expected. 'But,' said he, 'like other novices, you seem to imagine that all excellence lies in the lungs; whereas such violent exertions should be used very sparingly, and upon extraordinary occasions; for if an actor make no reserve of his powers, how is he to rise according to the tone of the passion?' He then read the scene they had rehearsed, and with so much propriety and ease, as well as force, that Holcroft was surprised, having hitherto supposed the risible faculties to be the only ones over which he had any great power."

Thomas Holcroft came away from this celebrated wit, delighted with the ease and frankness of his behaviour, and elated with his prospect of success. Unluckily, however, he had already entered into negotiation with a very different person; and tempted by an offer nominally higher, in point of salary, agreed with Macklin for a small engagement in a theatre in Dublin. The brutal manners of Macklin are well known. Hazlitt says, that until the age of forty he could not even read; an asser-

tion which, considering the undoubted merit of his play, "The Man of the World," appears all but incredible. It is, however, certain that he was coarse, illiterate, and unfeeling; and the manner in which he suffered the Dublin manager to depart from the engagements into which he had entered with poor Holcroft does very little honour to his principles.

For the next seven years our luckless adventurer was tossed about the world as a strolling player, taking all parts, but succeeding best in old men and low comedy, singing in choruses, filling the post of prompter—always penniless, and sometimes nearly starved. At the end of that time his prospects improved; some family connection (it is not said what) threw him upon the powerful protection of the Grevilles and the Crewes, and we find him numbered in the Drury Lane company, and complaining in a letter to Sheridan of walking in processions, and playing the part of a dumb steward in "Love for Love."

Nevertheless, matters are mending. He takes a house in London, marries a second wife, becomes a recognised author, and is employed by the London booksellers to write an account of the riots of 1780. Whilst attending the Old Bailey trials for that purpose, he was happy enough to save the life of an innocent man, who had nearly been condemned through the mistake of a witness.

Things go better. He brings out his less-known novels, his least celebrated, but still successful plays; and becomes one of the best and most voluminous translators upon record. If ever one happens to take up an English version of a French or German book of that period—"Memoirs of Baron Trenck," or "Caroline de Litchfeld"—and if that version have in it the zest and savour of original writing, we shall be sure to find the name of Thomas Holcroft in the title-page.

One of his translating feats was remarkable. Beaumarchais' wonderful play of "Figaro," was carrying the world before it in Paris, and would be sure to make the fortune of an English theatre. But the comedy was unpublished, and no copy could be procured from any quarter. Holcroft made up his mind to attend the performance every evening until he had fixed the whole work in his memory. He took a friend with him, and they wrote down their several recollections on their return, very literally comparing notes. When it is remembered that the "Marriage of Figaro," is the longest play in the French language, the effort of a foreigner bringing the whole away in a week or ten days will appear most extraordinary, for not the slightest memorandum could be made in the theatre. His translation under the name of "Follies of a Day" appeared almost immediately at Covent Garden, producing him six hundred pounds

from the manager, besides a large sum for the copyright.

This was perhaps the happiest time of Mr. Holcroft's life—this and a few succeeding years. His comedies, "Duplicity," "The School for Arrogance," and "The Road to Ruin," evinced talent (I had well nigh written genius) of the highest order. The serious parts above all are admirable. Perhaps no scenes have ever drawn so many tears as those between the father and the son in the last-mentioned play. The famous "Good Night" is truly the one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin; and although I have seen it played as well as anything can be played by Munden and Elliston, I have always felt that the real merit belonged to the author. His greater novels, too, "Anna St. Ives" and "Hugh Trevor," were full of powerful writing; and he seemed destined to a long course of literary prosperity. A terrible domestic grief came to break the course of this felicity. I transcribe Mr. Hazlitt's narrative:

"William Holcroft was his only son, and favourite child; and this very circumstance, perhaps, led to the catastrophe which had nearly proved fatal to his father, as well as to himself. He had been brought up, if anything, with too much care and tenderness; he was a boy of extraordinary capacity, and Mr. Holcroft thought no pains should be spared for his instruction and improvement. From the first,

however, he had shown an unsettled disposition; and his propensity to ramble was such, from his childhood, that when he was only four years old, and under the care of an aunt in Nottingham, he wandered away to a place at some distance, where there was a coffee-house, into which he went, and read the newspapers to the company, by whom he was taken care of, and sent home. This propensity was so strong in him, that it became habitual, and he had run away six or seven times before the last.

"On Sunday, November 8th, 1789, he brought his father a short poem. A watch, which had been promised to him as a reward, was given to him; his father conversed with him in the most affectionate manner, praised, encouraged him, and told him that, notwithstanding his former errors and wanderings, he was convinced he would become a good and excellent man. But he observed, when taking him by the hand to express his kindness, that the hand of the youth, instead of returning the pressure as usual, remained cold and insensible. This, however, at the moment was supposed to be accidental. He seemed unembarrassed, cheerful, and asked leave without any appearance of design or hesitation to dine with a friend in the city, which was immediately granted. He thanked his father, went down stairs, and several times anxiously inquired whether his father were gone to dress. As soon as he was told that he had left his

room, he went up stairs again, broke open a drawer, and took out forty pounds. With this, the watch, a pocket-book, and a pair of pistols of his father's, he hastened away to join one of his acquaintances, who was going to the West Indies. He was immediately pursued to Gravesend, but ineffectually. It was not discovered till the following Wednesday that he had taken the money. After several days of the most distressing inquietude, there appeared strong presumptive proof that he, with his acquaintance, was on board the 'Fame,' Captain Carr, then lying in the Downs. The father and a friend immediately set off, and travelled post all Sunday night to Deal. Their information proved true, for he was found to be on board the 'Fame,' where he assumed a false name, though his true situation was known to the Captain. He had spent all his money, except fifteen pounds, in paying for his passage, and purchasing what he thought he wanted. He had declared he would shoot any person who came to take him; but that if his father came he would shoot himself. His youth, for he was but sixteen, made the threat appear incredible. The pistols, pocket-book, and remaining money were locked up in safety for him by his acquaintance. But he had another pair of pistols concealed. Mr. Holcroft and his friend went on board, made inquiries, and understood he was there. He had retired into a dark part of the steerage. When

he was called, and did not answer, a light was sent for; and as he heard the ship's steward, some of the sailors, and his father, approaching, conscious of what he had done, and unbale to bear the presence of his father, and the open shame of detection, he suddenly put an end to his existence.

"The shock which Mr. Holcroft received was almost mortal. For three days he could not see his own family, and nothing but the love he bore that family could probably have prevented him from sinking under his affliction. He seldom went out of his house for a whole year afterwards; and the impression was never completely effaced from his mind."

After recovering from this calamity, Mr. Holcroft was surprised by one of a totally different nature, which came in the form of an indictment for high treason. Nothing but the panic into which the minds of men were thrown by the crimes and excesses of the first French Revolution can explain the virulence with which every one who stood suspected of cherishing liberty, or desiring reform, was assailed during that evil day. It was the cruel and unreasoning persecution that is born of fear; and in Mr. Holcroft's case the wrong was more glaring than in that of most others, inasmuch as he was a purely speculative politician, and his speculations, although sufficiently visionary and Utopian, were anything rather than sanguinary or violent.

One of his friends said of him, that he was a sort of natural Quaker. And certainly it would be as wise to prosecute a member of the Peace Society, or a writer on the millenium, as one whose dreams were of the perfectibility of human nature, the extinction of warfare, and the triumph of wisdom and justice upon earth.

He belonged it is true to the Society for Constitutional Reformation, but had moved none of the resolutions, had seldom spoken, and except for his literary eminence was one of the least prominent members of the association. Nevertheless his name, together with those of Hardy, Thelwall, Horne Tooke and eight others, appeared in the Bill presented to the Grand Jury at Hicks's Hall. Mr. Holcroft in some measure retaliated upon the Crown lawyers the surprise they had occasioned him by unexpectedly presenting himself before Chief Justice Eyre, and surrendering himself to the Court without waiting for the execution of the warrant. The manliness and firmness of his conduct, accompanied by perfect respectfulness and self-command, obtained for him more civility than was shown to the other parties included in the indictment.

The issue is well known. Thomas Hardy the first man put into the dock was acquitted, and the other prisoners were discharged without being brought to trial.

But the effect of this accusation did not terminate

in the Court of Justice. The demon of party hatred was evoked. Even such a man as Mr. Wyndham, high-minded, large-hearted, chivalrous as he was, did not disdain to talk of "acquitted felons," and as a dramatic writer Mr. Holcroft was especially amenable to public opinion. Every fresh play was a fresh battle; and a battle, whatever be the issue, is in itself fatal to a great success: so that at last, comedies which had no more to do with politics than "The Merry Wives of Windsor" were fain to be brought out under the name of a fictitious author.

It is not many years ago that I and another lover of the drama, an old and valued friend, were disputing as to the writer of "He's Much to Blame." Both possessed the play, and both were certain as to the name printed in the title-page. Neither were wrong. It was the story of the two knights and the shield. My friend's copy was the first edition with the feigned name; mine the seventh, when the ordeal was past, and the true author restored to his rightful place. May Heaven avert from us the renewal of such prejudice and such injustice!

Wearied out with these conflicts, Mr. Holcroft retired first to Hamburgh and then to France, where he resided many years, occasionally sending to England translations of popular foreign books. His last original work was one on France of great merit.

Few knew the people better or could describe them so well. His stories are pleasant and characteristic:

"My wife was one day buying some fish; while she was undetermined the girl said to her, '*Prenez cela, car votre mari est un brave homme?*' My wife replied, '*Oui, cela se peut bien; mais comment savez-vous qu'il est un brave homme?*' '*C'est égal,*' answered the girl, '*cela fait plaisir à entendre.*' This girl's maxim is sound morality wherever I have been in France."

This is characteristic too in the best sense: a charming mixture of goodness and grace.

"A poor musician who usually brought a small pianoforte in the afternoon to the Champs Elysées, and played that those who were pleased might reward him by a trifle, having played in vain one evening was sorrowfully returning home. He was seen by Elleviou (a famous actor), remarked, and questioned. The poverty and ill success of the wandering musician moved the pity of the actor, who desired the instrument might again be put down, and stepping aside he said he would return instantly. His wife and friend had passed on, and he brought them back. It was nearly dark. Pradere, his friend, sat down to the pianoforte and accompanied Elleviou who began to sing to the astonishment of numbers that were soon assembled. The men had drawn the hat over the brow, Madame Elleviou let down her veil, and went round to col-

lect. The pleasingness of her manner, the little thankful curtsies she dropt to all who gave, the whiteness of her hand, and the extraordinary music they heard, rendered the audience so liberal, that she made several *tours* and none ineffectually. Elleviou however could not long remain unknown, and finding themselves discovered Madame Elleviou gave all, and it was supposed more than all, she had collected from the crowd to the poor musician. The sum amounted to thirty shillings, and among the pence and halfpence there were crown pieces which no doubt were given by the actors. The feelings of the man as the audience dispersed are not easily to be described. The unexpected relief afforded to him who was departing so disconsolate was great indeed; but it was forgotten in the charming behaviour of those who relieved him; in their almost divine music, and in the strangeness of the adventure. The surrounding people were scarcely less moved; so kind an act from a man in such high public estimation excited more than admiration; and the tears of gratitude shed by the musician drew sympathizing drops from many of the spectators."

Mr. Holcroft wrote little verse, but had he chosen that medium of thought, would probably have excelled in it. The story of "Gaffer Gray" has, in common with many short poems of Southey, written at the same period, the great fault of setting class

against class, a fault which generally involves a want of truth; but it does its work admirably, and produces exactly the effect intended in the fewest possible words.

"Ho! why dost thou shiver and shake,
Gaffer Gray,
And why doth thy nose look so blue?"
"'Tis the weather that's cold,
'Tis I'm grown very old,
And my doublet is not very new,
Well-a-day!"

"Then line thy worn doublet with ale,
Gaffer Gray,
And warm thy old heart with a glass."
"Nay, but credit I've none,
And my money's all gone;
Then say how may that come to pass?
Well-a-day!"

"Hie away to the house on the brow,
Gaffer Gray;
And knock at the jolly priest's door."
"The priest often preaches
Against worldly riches;
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
Well-a-day!"

"The lawyer lives under the hill,
Gaffer Gray,

Warmly fenced both in back and in front."
"He will fasten his locks,
And will threaten the stocks,
Should he ever more find me in want,
Well-a-day!"

"The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
Gaffer Gray,
And the season will welcome you there."
"His fat beeves and his beer
And his merry new year
Are all for the flush and the fair,
Well-a-day!"

"My keg is but low, I confess,
Gaffer Gray:
What then? While it lasts, man, we'll live."
"The poor man alone,
When he hears the poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day!"

This author, so gifted, so various, and so laborious, one of the most remarkable of self-educated men, died in London on the 3rd of March, 1809, after a long and painful illness, at the age of sixty-three; I fear poor.

VIII.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

THERE are some places that seemed formed by nature for doubling and redoubling the delight of reading and dreaming over the greater poets. Living in the country, one falls into the habit of choosing out a fitting nest for that enjoyment, and with Beaumont and Fletcher especially, to whose dramatic fascinations I have the happy knack of abandoning myself, without troubling myself in the least about their dramatic faults (I do not speak here of graver sins, observe, gentle reader); their works never seem to me half so delightful as when I pore over them in the silence and solitude of a certain green lane, about half a mile from home; sometimes seated on the roots of an old fantastic beech, sometimes on the trunk of a felled oak, or

sometimes on the ground itself, with my back propped lazily against a rugged elm.

In that very lane am I writing on this sultry June day, luxuriating in the shade, the verdure, the fragrance of hay-field and of bean-field, and the absence of all noise, except the song of birds, and that strange mingling of many sounds, the whir of a thousand forms of insect life, so often heard among the general hush of a summer noon.

Woodcock Lane is so called, not after the migratory bird so dear to sportsman and to epicure, but from the name of a family, who three centuries ago owned the old manor-house, a part of which still adjoins it, just as the neighbouring eminence of Beech Hill is called after the ancient family of De la Beche, rather than from the three splendid beech-trees that still crown its summit; and this lane would probably be accounted beautiful by any one who loved the close recesses of English scenery, even though the person in question should happen not to have haunted it these fifty years as I have done.

It is a grassy lane, edging off from the high road, nearly two miles in length, and varying from fifty to a hundred yards in width. The hedgerows on either side are so thickly planted with tall elms as almost to form a verdant wall, for the greater part doubly screened by rows of the same stately tree, the down-dropping branches forming close

shady footpaths on either side, and leaving in the centre a broad level strip of the finest turf, just broken, here and there, by cart-tracks, and crossed by slender rills. The effect of these tall solemn trees, so equal in height, so unbroken, and so continuous, is quite grand and imposing as twilight comes on; especially when some slight bend in the lane gives to the outline almost the look of an amphitheatre.

On the southern side, the fields slope with more or less abruptness to the higher lands above, and winding footpaths and close woody lanes lead up the hill to the breezy common. To the north the fields are generally of pasture land, broken by two or three picturesque farm-houses, with their gable ends, their tall chimneys, their trim gardens, and their flowery orchards; and varied by a short avenue, leading to the equally picturesque old manor-house of darkest brick and quaintest architecture. Over the gates, too, we catch glimpses of more distant objects. The large white mansion where my youth was spent, rising from its plantations, and the small church, embowered in trees, whose bell is heard at the close of day, breathing of peace and holiness.

Towards the end of the lane a bright clear brook comes dancing over a pebbly bed, bringing with it all that water is wont to bring of life, of music, and of colour. Gaily it bubbles through banks adorned by the yellow flag, the flowering rush, the willow-

herb, the meadow-sweet, and the forget-me-not; now expanding into a wide quiet pool, now contracted into a mimic rapid between banks that almost meet; and so the little stream keeps us company, giving on this sunny day an indescribable feeling of refreshment and coolness, until we arrive at the end of the lane, where it slants away to the right amidst a long stretch of water-meadows; whilst we pause to gaze at the lovely scenery on the other hand, where a bit of marshy ground leads to the park paling and grand old trees of the Great House at Beech Hill through an open grove of oaks, terminated by a piece of wild woodland, so wild, that Robin Hood might have taken it for a glade in in his own Forest of merry Sherwood.

Except about half a mile of gravelly road, leading from the gate of the manor-house to one of the smaller farms, and giving by its warm orange tint, much of richness to the picture, there is nothing like a passable carriage-way in the whole length of the lane, so that the quiet is perfect.

Occasional passengers there are, however, gentle and simple; my friend, Mr. B., for instance, has just cantered past on his blood-horse with a nod and a smile saying nothing, but apparently a good deal amused with my arrangements. And here comes a procession of cows going to milking, with an old attendant, still called the cow-boy, who, although they have seen me often enough, one

should think, sitting underneath a tree writing, with my little maid close by hemming flounces, and my dog, Fanchon, nestled at my feet—still *will* start as if they had never seen a woman before in their lives. Back they start and then they rush forward, and then the old drover emits certain sounds, which it is to be presumed the cows understand; sounds so horribly discordant that little Fanchon—although to her, too, they ought to be familiar if not comprehensible—starts up in a fright on her feet, deranging all the economy of my extempore desk, and well-nigh upsetting the inkstand. Very much frightened is my pretty pet, the arrantest coward that ever walked upon four legs! And so she avenges herself, as cowards are wont to do, by following the cows at safe distance, as soon as they are fairly past, and beginning to bark amain when they are nearly out of sight. Then follows a motley group of the same nature, colts, yearlings, calves, heifers, with a shouting boy and his poor shabby mongrel cur for driver. The poor cur wants to play with Fanchon, but Fanchon besides being a coward, is also a beauty and holds her state; although I think if he could but stay long enough, that the good humour of the poor merry creature would prove infectious and beguile the little lady into a game of romps. Lastly, appears the most solemn troop of all, a grave company of geese and goslings with the gander at their head,

marching with the decorum and dignity proper to the birds who saved Rome. Fanchon, who once had an affair with a gander in which she was notably worsted, retreats out of sight and ensconces herself between me and the tree.

Besides these mere passing droves, we have a scattered little flock of ewes and lambs belonging to an industrious widow on the hill, and tended by two sunburnt smiling children, her son and daughter; a pretty pair, as innocent as the poor sheep they watch beside, never seen apart. And peasants returning from their work, and a stray urchin birds-nesting; and that will make a complete catalogue of the frequenters of our lane—except, indeed, that now and then a village youth and village maiden will steal along the sheltered path. Perhaps they come to listen to the nightingales, for which the place is famous; perhaps they come to listen to the voice which each prefers to all the nightingales that ever sang—who knows?

Such are our passers-by. Sometimes, however, we have what I was about to call settled inhabitants in the shape of a camp of gipsies.

Just where the lane, enlivened by a rustic bridge, suddenly expands to nearly double its proper width, a nook appears, so dry, so snug, so shady, so cozy, that it is almost worth while to be a gipsy to live in it. Here, at almost every season, between May and November, may be seen two or three low tents with

a cart or so drawn up under the hedge, an old horse and sundry donkeys grazing round about. At safe distance from the encampment appears a fire, glimmering and vapoury by day, glowing into an intensity of blaze and comfort in the twilight. Sometimes a pot is hung on by the primitive contrivance of three sticks united at the top, sometimes a copper kettle dazzingly bright and clean, and around it the usual group of picturesque women and children. The men, who carry on a small trade in forest ponies, are seldom visible at the camp: the children make baskets, the women sell them and tell fortunes; the former calling affording an excuse and an introduction to the less ostensible, but not less profitable craft.

Baskets they make and baskets they sell, at about double the price at which they might be bought at the dearest shop in the good town of Belford Regis; of this I am myself a living instance, having been talked into buying a pair at that rate only the last Saturday that ever fell.

I confess to liking the gipsies: strange, wild, peculiar people, whose origin, whose history, whose very language is a mystery! I do not like them the less that I have never experienced at their hands the slightest incivility or the most trifling wrong—for this affair of the baskets can hardly be called such, it being wholly at my option to buy or to refuse.

Last Saturday I happened to be sitting on a fallen tree somewhat weary; my little damsel working as usual at the other end, and Fanchon balancing herself on the trunk between us; the curls of her brown coat—she is entirely brown—turning into gold as the sunshine played upon them through the leaves.

In this manner were we disposed, when a gipsy, with a pair of light baskets in her hand, came and offered them for sale. She was a middle-aged woman, who, in spite of her wandering life, perhaps, because of that hardy out-of-door life, had retained much of her early beauty; the flashing eyes, the pearly teeth, the ruddy cheeks, the fine erect figure. It happened that, not wanting them, my companion had rejected these identical baskets when brought to our door in the morning. She told me so, and I quietly declined them. My friend the gipsy apparently gave the matter up, and claiming me as an old acquaintance, began to inquire after my health, and fell into the pleasantest strain of conversation possible; spoke of my father, who, she said, had been kind to her and to her tribe (no doubt she said truly; he was kind to everybody, and had a liking for the wandering race); spoke of her children at the gipsy school in Dorsetshire; of the excellent Mr. Crabbe, the friend of her people, at Southampton; then she began stroking Fanchon (who, actually to my

astonishment, permitted the liberty; in general she suffers no one to touch her that is not gentleman or lady); Fanchon she stroked, and of Flush, the dear old dog, now lying under the rose tree, she talked; then to leave no one unpropitiated, she threw out a word of pleasant augury, a sort of gratuitous fortune-telling, to the hemmer of flounces; then she attacked me again with old recollections, trusting with singular knowledge of human nature to the power of the future upon the young, and of the past upon the old—to me she spoke of happy memories, to my companion of happiness to come; and so (how could I help it?) I bought the baskets.

I seem to have wandered pretty widely from my subject; but the old dramatists loved these commoners of nature. Bröome, in the "Jovial Crew," has constructed a pleasant and genial comedy out of no higher materials, and our authors themselves, in "Beggar's Bush," have made most dramatic and effective use of these outlawed wanderers, and would, I am sure, have been the last to blame me for dallying in their company.

I extract some of the charming lyrics interspersed through their plays, not starting from them as Ben Jonson's do, a shining gem in a dusky mine, but incorporate with the golden ore as rich and precious as themselves.

FROM THE "MAID'S TRAGEDY."

Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens willow branches bear,
Say I died true.
My love was false, but I was firm,
From my hour of birth;
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth.

FROM THE "LITTLE FRENCH LAWYER."

This way, this way, come and hear,
You that hold these pleasures dear;
Fill your ears with our sweet sound,
While we melt the frozen ground.
This way, come: make haste, O fair!
Let your clear eyes gild the air.
Come and bless us with your sight;
This way, this way, seek delight!

FROM THE "ELDER BROTHER."

Beauty clear and fair,
Where the air
Rather like a perfume dwells;
Where the violet and the rose,
Their blue veins in blush disclose,
And come to honour nothing else.

Where to live near
And planted there,

Is to live, and still live new;
Where to gain a favour is
More than light, perpetual bliss,
Make me live by serving you.

Dear, back again recall,
To this light:
A stranger to himself and all.
Both the wonder and the story,
Shall be yours and eke the glory;
I am your perpetual thrall.

FROM "VALENTINIAN."

The following songs are strikingly illustrative of a peculiarity that has often struck me in reading the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher; the absence of any mark of antiquity, either in the diction or the construction. Hardly anything in their verse smacks of the age. They were contemporary with Ben Jonson, and yet how rugged is his English compared with their fluent and courtly tongue! They were almost contemporary with a greater than he—a greater far than any or all, and yet Shakespeare's blank verse has an antique sound when read after theirs. Dryden, himself so perfect a model as regards style, says in one of those master-pieces of criticism, the prefaces to his plays, that in Beaumont and Fletcher, our language has attained to its perfection. I doubt if it have much improved since, nor has it for the uses of poetry very materially altered. This "Invocation

to Sleep" might, for diction and rhythm, have been written to-day, always supposing that we had anybody capable of writing it.

Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted Prince! Fall like a cloud
In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud
Or painful to his slumbers; easy, light,
And as a purling stream thou son of night
Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain,
Like hollow-murmuring wind oh silver rain!
Into this Prince, gently, or gently slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride!

The same may be said of the next.

God Lyæus, ever young,
Ever honoured, ever sung;
Stained with blood of lusty grapes,
In a thousand lusty shapes.
Dance upon the mazer's brim,
In the crimson liquor swim;
From the plenteous hand divine,
Let a river run with wine.
God of youth, let this day here
Enter neither care nor fear!

FROM "ROLLO."

Take, oh, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn.
But my kisses bring again,—
Seals of love, though sealed in vain.

Hide, oh, hide those hills of snow,
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow,
Are yet of those that April wears.
But first set my poor heart free,
Bound in those icy chains by thee.

We are irresistibly reminded of the "Penseroso" in reading the fine song that follows, as we are of "Comus" in the "Faithful Shepherdess." That Milton had Fletcher in his thoughts cannot be doubted; but the great epic poet added so much from his own rich store, that the imitation may well be pardoned by the admirers of both, the rather that the earlier bard stands the test of such a comparison well. Both are crowned poets; but they wear their bays with a difference.

FROM THE "NICE VALOUR, OR THE PASSIONATE MADMAN."

Hence all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights,
Wherein you speed your folly!
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see 't,
But only melancholy,
Oh sweetest melancholy!
Welcome, folded arms, and fixèd eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound!

Fountain heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!

Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls!
A midnight bell, a parting groan,
These are the sounds we feed upon.
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley,
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

THE SATYR'S SPEECH, FROM THE "FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS."

Thorough yon same bending plain,
That flings his arms down to the main,
And thro' these thick woods have I run
Whose bottom never kissed the sun,
Since the lusty Spring began.
All to please my master Pan,
Have I trotted without rest
To get him fruit; for at a feast
He entertains this coming night
His paramour, the Syrinx bright.
But behold, a fairer sight!
By that heavenly form of thine,
Brightest fair, thou art divine;
Sprung from great immortal race
Of the gods; for in thy face
Shines more awful majesty,
Than dull weak mortality
Dare with misty eyes behold
And live! Therefore on this mould
Lowly do I bend my knee
In worship of thy deity.
Deign it, goddess, from my hand
To receive whate'er this land
From her fertile womb doth send
Of her chief fruits; and but lend

Belief to that the satyr tells:
Fairer by the famous wells
To this present day ne'er grew,
Never better nor more true.
Here be grapes, whose lusty blood
Is the learned poet's good;
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus; nuts more brown
Than the squirrel whose teeth crack 'em;
Deign, oh! fairest fair, to take 'em!
For these black-eyed Dryope
Hath oftentimes commanded me
With my clasped knee to climb:
See, how well the lusty time
Hath decked their rising cheeks in red,
Such as on your lips is spread.
Here be berries for a queen,
Some be red, some be green;
These are of that luscious meat
The great god Pan himself doth eat:
All these, and what the woods can yield,
The hanging mountain, or the field,
I freely offer, and ere long
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong;
'Till when humbly leave I take,
Lest the great Pan do awake,
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,
Under a broad beech's shade.
I must go, I must run,
Swifter than the fiery sun.

The charming pastoral from whence this beautiful speech is taken, was irrevocably condemned in the theatre on the first and only night of

representation ; which catastrophe, added to a similar one that befell Congreve's best comedy, "The Way of the World," both authors being at the time in the very flood-tide of popularity, has been an unspeakable comfort to unsuccessful dramatists ever since. I recall it chiefly to mention the hearty spirit with which two of the most eminent of Fletcher's friendly rivals came to the rescue with laudatory verses. The circumstance does so much honour to all parties, and some of the lines are so good, that I cannot help quoting them: George Chapman says that the poem—

> Renews the golden world, and holds through all
> The holy laws of homely Pastoral;
> Where flowers and founts and nymphs and semi-gods
> And all the graces find their old abodes;
> Where forests flourish but in endless verse,
> And meadows, nothing fit for purchasers:
> The iron age

(Think of that in the days of James the First!)

> This iron age that eats itself will never
> Bite at your golden world, that others ever
> Loved as itself.

Ben Jonson, first characterising the audience after a fashion by no means complimentary, says that the play failed because it wanted the laxity of moral and of language which they expected and desired. He continues:—

I that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,
And wish that all the muses' blood were spilt
In such a martyrdom, to vex their eyes,
Do crown thy murdered poem, which shall rise
A glorifièd work to time, when fire
Or moths shall eat what all these fools admire.

For the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, that mine of superb and regal poetry, I have no room now. They must remain untouched.

IX.

FASHIONABLE POETS.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

It is now nearly thirty years ago that two youths appeared at Cambridge, of such literary and poetical promise as the University had not known since the days of Gray. What is rarer still, the promise was kept. One of these "marvellous boys" turned out a man of world-wide renown—the spiritual poet, the splendid orator, the brilliant historian, the delightful essayist—in a word, Thomas Babington Macaulay, now, I suppose, incontestably our greatest living writer. The other was the subject of this paper.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed (I wish it had pleased his godfathers and godmothers to bestow upon him a plain English Christian name, and spare him and me the vulgar abomination of this conglomeration of inharmonious sounds!) Winthrop Mackworth

Praed was born in London, in the beginning of this century, of parents belonging to the great banking-house, which still remains in the family. Sent early to Eton, he, while yet a schoolboy, followed the example of Canning, who appears to have been the object of his emulation in more points than one, and in conjunction with Mr. Moultrie set up a paper called the "Etonian," to which he was the principal contributor, and which was so successful that it went through four editions, and established for the chief writer a high reputation for precocious talent. At Cambridge this reputation was more than sustained. He was the pride and glory of Trinity, and left college with an almost unprecedented number of prizes, for Greek ode and Latin epigram. Even the greater world of London, where University fame so often melts away and is seen no more, was equally favourable to Mr. Praed. He and his friendly rival, Mr. Macaulay, gave their valuable assistance to "Knight's Quarterly Magazine," and every fresh article made its impression. He wrote also in the "New Monthly," and in the annuals, then seen on every table, with still increasing brilliancy; contributed pungent political satire to other journals, and finally entered Parliament with such hopes and expectations as his talents might well warrant, but which have seldom been excited by an untried member.

In the House of Commons he did quite enough

to justify the warmest anticipations of his friends, and to earn for himself the name of "a rising man," that most auspicious of all names to a political aspirant.

What he might have become had life been spared, it were now vain to conjecture. He married happily; he died young. Light, lively, brilliant, the darling of every society that he entered, he was yet most beloved by those who knew him best. To me it seems that had he outlived the impetuosity of youth, he would have become something higher and better than a political partisan, however clever; or a fashionable poet however elegant. There was through all his poetry—and it is its deepest although not its most obvious charm—a love of the genuine and the true, a scorn for the false and the pretending, which is the foundation of all that is really good in eloquence as well as in poetry, in conduct and in character, as well as in art. The germ of the patriot and the statesman is to be found in the love of truth and the hatred of pretence; and never were they more developed than in the poems of Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

That these poems are the most graceful and finished verses of society that can be found in our language, it is impossible to doubt. At present they are so scarce, that the volume from which I transcribe the greater part of the following extracts is an American collection, procured with considerable difficulty

and delay from the United States. Others of the poems are taken from his own manuscripts, most kindly lent to me by one of his nearest connections, whom I am happy enough to call my friend; and one or two of the charades I have copied from the "Penny Magazine" of the author's early friend, Mr. Charles Knight, where they are strangely enough called enigmas.

THE VICAR.

Some years ago, ere Time and Taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvey,
When Darnel Park was Darnel waste
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the Green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
Fair Margaret in her tidy kirtle
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlour-steps collected,
Wagged all their tails and seemed to say:
"Our master knows you; you're expected."

Up rose the Reverend Doctor Brown,
Up rose the Doctor's "winsome marrow;"
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous barrow.

Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
And warmed himself in court and college,
He had not gained an honest friend,
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge;
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love or liquor,
Good sooth the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage or the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses;
It slipped from politics to puns;
It passed from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,
Of loud dissent the mortal terror;
And when by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished truth or startled error,
The Baptist found him far too deep;
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow,
And the lean Levite went to sleep
And dreamt of eating pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
That earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,

Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome or from Athanasius;
And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penned and planned them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble lords and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost;
Lines to a ringlet or a turban,
And trifles for the "Morning Post,"
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
Although he had a taste for smoking.
And when religious sects ran mad
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad
It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind and loved to sit
In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
And share the widow's homelier pottage.
At his approach complaint grew mild,
And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
The welcome that they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
Of Julius Cæsar or of Venus;
From him I learned the rule of three,
Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and Quæ genus;
I used to singe his powdered wig,
To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig
When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change! In vain I look
For haunts in which by boyhood trifled;
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled!
The church is larger than before,
You reach it by a carriage entry;
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted for the gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian;
Whose hand is white, whose voice is clear,
Whose tone is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid? Look down
And construe on the slab before you—
"Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,
Vir nullâ non donandus lauro."

The man who wrote the above admirable portrait was as good as he was clever. The next has equal merit:

QUINCE.

Near a small village in the West,
Where many very worthy people
Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best
To guard from evil church and steeple,
There stood—alas, it stands no more!—
A tenement of brick and plaster,
Of which, for forty years and four,
My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome was he in hut and hall,
To maids and matrons, peers and peasants;
He won the sympathies of all
By making puns and making presents.
Though all the parish was at strife,
He kept his counsel and his carriage,
And laughed, and loved a quiet life,
And shrunk from chancery suits and marriage.

Sound was his claret and his head,
Warm was his double ale and feelings;
His partners at the whist-club said
That he was faultless in his dealings.
He went to church but once a-week,
Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him
An upright man, who studied Greek,
And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums, hospitals and schools
He used to swear were made to cozen;

All who subscribed to them were fools—
And he subscribed to half-a-dozen.
It was his doctrine that the poor
Were always able, never willing;
And so the beggar at the door
Had first abuse and then a shilling.

Some public principles he had,
But was no flatterer nor fretter;
He rapped his box when things were bad
And said I cannot make them better.
And much he loathed the patriot's snort,
And much he scorned the placeman's snuffle,
And cut the fiercest quarrels short
With, "Patience, gentlemen, and shuffle!"

For full ten years his pointer, Speed,
Had couched beneath his master's table,
For twice ten years his old white steed
Had fattened in his master's stable.
Old Quince averred upon his troth
They were the ugliest beasts in Devon;
And none knew why he fed them both
With his own hands, six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock,
Quicker than thought the village slatterns
Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,
And took up Mrs. Glasse or patterns.
Alice was studying baker's bills;
Louisa looked the queen of knitters;
Jane happened to be hemming frills;
And Nell by chance was making fritters.

But all was vain. And while decay
Came like a tranquil moonlight o'er him,
And found him gouty still and gay,
With no fair nurse to bless or bore him;
His rugged smile and easy chair,
His dread of matrimonial lectures,
His wig, his stick, his powdered hair
Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above
Had crazed him with excess of knowledge:
Some heard he had been crossed in love
Before he came away from college;
Some darkly hinted that His Grace
Did nothing, great or small, without him!
Some whispered, with a solemn face,
That there was something odd about him.

I found him at three score and ten
A single man, but bent quite double,
Sickness was coming on him then
To take him from a world of trouble.
He prosed of sliding down the hill,
Discovered he grew older daily;
One frosty day he made his will,
The next he sent for Dr. Baillie.

And so he lived, and so he died;
When last I sat beside his pillow
He shook my hand: "Ah me!" he cried,
"Penelope must wear the willow!
Tell her I hugged her rosy chain
While life was flickering in the socket,

And say that when I call again
I'll bring a licence in my pocket.

"I've left my house and grounds to Fag,
(I hope his master's shoes will suit him!)
And I've bequeathed to you my nag,
To feed him for my sake, or shoot him.
The vicar's wife will take old Fox;
She'll find him an uncommon mouser,
And let her husband have my box,
My Bible and my Assmanshäuser.

"Whether I ought to die or not
My doctors cannot quite determine;
It's only clear that I shall rot
And be, like Priam, food for vermin.
My debts are paid. But Nature's debt
Almost escaped my recollection!
Tom, we shall meet again; and yet
I cannot leave you my direction!"

The next poem, which describes a first flirtation (for it hardly deserves the name of first love), is as true as if it had been written in prose by Jane Austen.

THE BELLE OF THE BALL.

Years, years ago, ere yet my dreams,
Had been of being wise or witty;
Ere I had done with writing themes,
Or yawned o'er this infernal 'Chitty,'
Years, years ago, while all my joys,
Were in my fowling-piece and filly,

In short, while I was yet a boy,
I fell in love with Laura Lily.

I saw her at a country ball
There where the sound of flute and fiddle,
Gave signal, sweet in that old hall,
Of hands across and down the middle;
Hers was the subtlest spell by far,
Of all that sets young hearts romancing,
She was our queen, our rose, our star,
And when she danced—Oh, heaven! her dancing!

Dark was her hair; her hand was white;
Her voice was exquisitely tender;
Her eyes were full of liquid light;
I never saw a waist so slender.
Her every look, her every smile,
Shot right and left a score of arrows;
I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,
And wondered where she'd left her sparrows!

She talked of politics or prayers,
Of Southey's prose, or Wordsworth's sonnets,
Of daggers, or of dancing bears,
Of battles, or the last new bonnets;
By candle-light, at twelve o'clock,
To me it mattered not a tittle,
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
I might have thought they murmured Little.

Through sunny May, through sultry June,
I loved her with a love eternal;
I spoke her praises to the moon,
I wrote them for the Sunday journal.

My mother laughed; I soon found out
That ancient ladies have no feeling.
My father frowned; but how should gout
Find any happiness in kneeling?

She was the daughter of a dean,
Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic;
She had one brother just thirteen,
Whose colour was extremely hectic;
Her grandmother for many a year,
Had fed the parish with her bounty;
Her second cousin was a peer,
And lord-lieutenant of the county.

But titles and the three per cents,
And mortgages and great relations,
And India Bonds, and tithes, and rents,
Oh! what are they to love's sensations?
Black eyes, fair forcheads, clustering locks,
Such wealth, such honours Cupid chooses;
He cares as little for the stocks,
As Baron Rothschild for the Muses.

She sketched: the vale, the wood, the beach
Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading;
She botanized: I envied each
Young blossom in her boudoir fading;
She warbled Handel: it was grand,
She made the Catalani jealous;
She touched the organ: I could stand
For hours and hours and blow the bellows.

She kept an album, too, at home,
Well filled with all an album's glories;

Paintings of butterflies and Rome;
Pattern for trimming; Persian stories;
Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo;
Fierce odes to famine and to slaughter,
And autographs of Prince Le Boo,
And recipes for elder-water.

And she was flattered, worshipped, bored,
Her steps were watched, her dress was noted,
Her poodle dog was quite adored,
Her sayings were extremely quoted.
She laughed, and every heart was glad
As if the taxes were abolished:
She frowned, and every look was sad,
As if the opera were demolished.

She smiled on many just for fun—
I knew that there was nothing in it;
I was the first, the only one,
Her heart had thought of for a minute.
I knew it, for she told me so,
In phrase that was divinely moulded;—
She wrote a charming hand, and oh!
How neatly all her notes were folded.

Our love was like most other loves,—
A little glow, a little shiver;
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
And "Fly not yet," upon the river;
Some jealousy of some one's heir;
Some hopes of dying broken-hearted;
A miniature; a lock of hair;
The usual vows;—and then we parted.

We parted:—months and years rolled by,
We met again some summers after;
Our parting was all sob and sigh!
Our meeting was all mirth and laughter!
For in my heart's most secret cell
There had been many other lodgers;
And she was not the ball-room belle,
But only Mistress—something—Rogers!

The political satire is equally good-humoured, equally characteristic, and equally clever, perhaps cleverer—if that can be—than these specimens. Some of the objects of that keen and pungent verse still remain alive, although many are, like the author, removed from this transitory scene. I abstain, therefore, from inserting what might by possibility cause pain. The following cavalier version of the great fight of Marston Moor is transcribed from the author's own manuscript, apparently the first sketch. It is wonderful how little that fertile and fluent pen found to alter or to amend.

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's note is high!
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the big drum makes reply!
Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant cavaliers,
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter in our ears.
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas! White Guy is at the door,
And the raven whets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,
And she brought a silken banner down the narrow turret-stair;

Oh! many were the tears that those radiant eyes had shed,
As she traced the bright word "Glory" in the gay and glancing thread;
And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely features ran,
As she said, "It is your lady's gift, unfurl it in the van!"

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,
Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black dragoons of Pride;
The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sicklier qualm,
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm;
When they see my lady's gew-gaw flaunt proudly on their wing,
And hear her loyal soldier's shout, "For God and for the King."

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken, along the royal line
They fly, the braggarts of the court! the bullies of the Rhine!
Stout Langdale's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier, with a curse and with a frown,
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their flight,
"The German boar, had better far, have supped in York to-night."

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain:
Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the rout,
"For Church and King, fair gentlemen! spur on, and fight it out!"
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a stave,
And now he quotes a stage-play, and now he fells a knave.

God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of fear;
God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! for fearful odds are here!
The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and thrust,
"Down, down," they cry, "with Belial! down with him to the dust."
"I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's trusty sword,
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for the Lord!"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,
The grey-haired warder watches from the castle's topmost tower;
"What news? what news, old Hubert?"—"The battle's lost and won;
The royal troops are melting, like mists before the sun!
And a wounded man approaches;—I'm blind, and cannot see,
Yet sure I am that sturdy step, my master's step must be!"

"I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from as rude and red a fray,
As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for minstrel's lay!
Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor quantum suff.
I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with boots and buff;—
Though Guy through many a gaping wound is breathing forth his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife!

"Sweet! we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's mischance;
For if the worst befal me, why better axe and rope,
Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for a pope!

Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-eared boor,
Who sent me with my standard, on foot from Marston Moor!"

I pass some poems that have been greatly praised, "The Red Fishermen," "Lilian," and "The Troubadour," to come to the charades—the charming charades—which, in their form of short narrative poems, he may be said to have invented. I insert a few taken almost at random from his brilliant collection:

I.

I graced Don Pedro's revelry,
All dressed in fire and feather;
When loveliness and chivalry,
Were met to feast together.
He flung the slave who moved the lid,
A purse of maravedis;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

He vowed a vow, that noble knight,
Before he went to table,
To make his only sport the fight,
His only couch the stable,
Till he had dragged as he was bid
Five score of Turks to Cadiz;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

To ride through mountains, where my *First*
A banquet would be reckoned;
Through deserts, where to quench their thirst
Men vainly turn my *Second*.

To leave the gates of fair Madrid,
And dare the gates of Hades;—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
For me and for the ladies.

II.

Morning is beaming o'er brake and bower;
Hark! to the chimes from yonder tower!
Call ye my *First* from her chamber now,
With her snowy veil and her jewelled brow.

Lo! where my *Second* in gorgeous array,
Leads from his stable her beautiful bay,
Looking for her as he curvets by
With an arching neck and a glancing eye.

Spread is the banquet and studied the song,
Ranged in meet order the menial throng,
Jerome is ready with book and with stole,
And the maidens strew flowers,—but where is my Whole?

Look to the hill!—is he climbing its side?
Look to the stream!—is he crossing its tide?
Out on the false one! he comes not yet—
Lady, forget him! yea, scorn and forget!

The next is a surname, and one of the most beautiful compliments ever offered to a great poet.

III.

Come from my *First*, aye, come!
The battle dawn is nigh;
And the screaming trump and the thundering drum
Are calling thee to die!

Fight as thy father fought;
Fall as thy father fell;
Thy task is taught; thy shroud is wrought;
So; forward and farewell!

Toll ye my *Second!* toll!
Fling high the flambeau's light;
And sing the hymn for a parted soul
Beneath the silent night!
The wreath upon his head,
The cross upon his breast,
Let the prayer be said, and the tear be shed.
So,—take him to his rest!

Call ye my *Whole*, ay, call
The lord of lute and lay!
And let him greet the sable pall
With a noble song to-day;
Go, call him by his name!
No fitter hand may crave
To light the flame of a soldier's fame
On the turf of a soldier's grave.

I add a few more of these graceful pleasantries:

IV.

He talked of daggers and of darts,
Of passions and of pains,
Of weeping eyes and wounded hearts,
Of kisses and of chains;
He said, though love was kin to grief,
He was not born to grieve;
He said, though many rued belief,
She safely might believe.

But still the lady shook her head,
And swore by yea and nay,
My *Whole* was all that he had said
And all that he could say.

He said my *First* whose silent car
Was slowly wandering by,
Veiled in a vapour faint and far
Through the unfathomed sky,
Was like the smile whose rosy light
Across her young lips passed,
Yet, oh! it was not half so bright,
It changed not half so fast.
But still the lady shook her head,
And swore by yea and nay,
My *Whole* was all that he had said,
And all that he could say.

And then he set a cypress wreath
Upon his raven hair,
And drew his rapier from its sheath,—
Which made the lady stare;
And said his life blood's purple glow
My *Second* there should dim,
If she he loved and worshipped so,
Would only weep for him.
But still the lady shook her head,
And swore by yea and nay,
My *Whole* was all that he had said
And all that he could say.

v.

My *First* came forth in booted state,
For fair Valencia bound;

And smiled to feel my *Second's* weight,
And hear its creaking sound.

"And here's a gaoler sweet," quoth he,
"You cannot bribe or cozen;
To keep one ward in custody
Wise men will forge a dozen."

But daybreak saw a lady guide
My *Whole* across the plain,
With a handsome cavalier beside,
To hold her bridle-rein:

And "blessings on the bonds," quoth he,
"Which wrinkled age imposes,
If woman must a prisoner be,
Her chain should be of roses."

VI.

My *First* was dark o'er earth and air,
As dark as she could be!
The stars that gemmed her ebon hair
Were only two or three:
King Cole saw thrice as many there
As you or I could see.

"Away, King Cole," mine hostess said,
"Flaggon and flask are dry;
Your steed is neighing in the shed,
For he knows a storm is nigh."
She set my *Second* on his head,
And she set it all awry.

VII.

Sir Hilary charged at Agincourt,—
Sooth 'twas an awful day!

And though in that old age of sport
The rufflers of the camp and court
Had little time to pray,
'Tis said Sir Hilary muttered there
Two syllables by way of prayer.

My *First* to all the brave and proud
Who see to-morrow's sun;
My *Next* with her cold and quiet cloud
To those who find their dewy shroud
Before to-day's be done;
And both together to all blue eyes
That weep when a warrior nobly dies.

This charade is still a mystery to me. Solve it, fair readers!

X.

PEASANT POETS.

JOHN CLARE.

NEARLY at the same period, when Macaulay and Praed sprang into public life, the world of letters was startled by the announcement of a new poet, a Northamptonshire peasant, whose claims to distinction were vouched for by judges of no ordinary sagacity, little given to mistake, and by no means addicted to enthusiasm. His character was blameless and amiable. Although of a frame little suited to severity of toil, he had for many years supported his aged parents by manual labour, and in bringing his powers into the light of day, he had undergone more than the ordinary amount of delay, of suspense, of disappointment, and of "the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick."

From the prefaces of his three publications, the "Poems, Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery,"

"The Village Minstrel," and "The Rural Muse," his early history may be collected. At the age of thirteen, when he could read tolerably, and knew something of writing and arithmetic, he met, accidentally, with Thomson's "Seasons," a book which not only awakened in his mind the love of poetry, but led him at once to the kind of poetry in which, from situation and from natural aptitude, he was most likely to succeed. For another sixteen years his brief leisure was filled with attempts more or less successful, to clothe, in the language of verse, his own feelings and observations. His chief trial, during this long probation, must have been his entire loneliness of mind—the absence of all companionship or sympathy. At this time he met with the "Patty" whom he afterwards married, and, in the hope of improving his circumstances, began to consider seriously about publishing a small volume by subscription; and having ascertained that the expense of three hundred copies of a prospectus would not be more than a pound, he set himself resolutely to work, and by hard labour, day and night, at length succeeded in accumulating the required sum.

"I distributed my papers," said the poor author, "but as I could get no way of pushing them into higher circles than those with whom I was acquainted, they consequently passed off as quietly as if they had still been in my possession, unprinted and not

seen." For a long while the number of subscribers stood at seven. At length, however, a copy of the proposals won their way to London. Messrs. Taylor and Hessey gave twenty pounds for the Poems; and, what was far better for the author, contrived to obtain for them immediate publicity.

The little volume was striking in what it had and in what it wanted. The very struggle between original thought and imperfect expression sometimes resulted in happiness and beauty. One thing was certain: John Clare was no imitator. Persons of taste and generosity in the higher classes took him by the hand. Lord Exeter sent for him to Burleigh, and hearing that he earned thirty pounds per annum by field labour, settled an annuity of fifteen pounds upon him, with a view to his devoting half his time to agricultural occupations, and half to literary pursuits. This benevolent proposal, which sounds so hopefully, proved a notable failure, chiefly in consequence of our national failing of running after everything and everybody that has attained a sufficient portion of notoriety. Poor Clare became as great a lion as if he had committed two or three murders. He was frequently interrupted, as often as three times a-day, during his labours in the harvest-field, to gratify the curiosity of admiring visitors; and a plan, excellent in its principle, was abandoned perforce. Other wealthy and liberal noblemen joined in the good work. Lord Spencer

gave ten pounds per annum. A subscription was set on foot by Lord Radstock, to which the present King of the Belgians, Lord Fitzwilliam, and Lord John Russell contributed generously, and which, together with the profits of his works—for "The Village Minstrel" had now been published—realised for him altogether an annual income of five-and-forty pounds. This appeared affluence to our poet, and he married.

Praised by the "Quarterly," and befriended by noble patrons and generous booksellers, his prospects seemed more than commonly smiling. His third publication, too, "The Rural Muse," in spite of its unpromising title, more than justified all that had been done for him. The improvement was most remarkable. That he should gain a greater command over language, a choicer selection of words, and the knowledge of grammatical construction, which he had wanted before, was to be expected; but the habit of observation seemed to have increased in fineness and accuracy in proportion as he gained the power of expression, and the delicacy of his sentiment kept pace with the music of his versification. What can be closer to nature than his description of the nightingale's nest?

> Up this green woodland ride let's softly rove,
> And list the Nightingale; she dwells just here.
> Hush! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear
> The noise might drive her from her home of love;

For here I've heard her many a merry year,
At morn, at eve, nay, all the livelong day,
As though she lived on song. This very spot
Just where that old-man's-beard all wildly trails
Rude arbours o'er the road, and stops the way;
And where the child its blue-bell flowers hath got,
Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails;
There have I hunted like a very boy,
Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn,
To find her nest, and see her feed her young.
And vainly did I many hours employ:
All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn.
And where those crumpling fern-leaves ramp among
The hazel's under boughs, I've nestled down
And watched her while she sang; and her renown
Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird
Should have no better dress than russet brown.
Her wings would tremble in her extasy,
And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy,
And mouth wide open to release her heart
Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part
Of Summer's fame she shared, for so to me
Did happy fancies shapen her employ.
But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,
All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain:
The timid bird had left the hazel bush,
And oft in distance hid to sing again.
Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,
Rich extasy would pour its luscious strain,
'Till envy spurred the emulating Thrush
To start less wild and scarce inferior songs;
For while of half the year Care him bereaves,
To damp the ardour of his speckled breast,
The Nightingale to Summer's life belongs,
And naked trees, and Winter's nipping wrongs

Are strangers to her music and her rest.
Her joys are ever green, her world is wide!
Hark! there she is, as usual. Let's be hush;
For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guessed,
Her curious house is hidden. Part aside
Those hazel branches in a gentle way,
And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,
For we will have another search to-day,
And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and round,
And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows
We'll wade right through; it is a likely nook.
In such like spots, and often on the ground
They'll build where rude boys never think to look;—
Ay, as I live! her secret nest is here
Upon this white-thorn stump! I've searched about
For hours in vain. There put that bramble by,—
Nay, trample on its branches, and get near.
How subtle is the bird! She started out,
And raised a plaintive note of danger nigh
Ere we were past the brambles; and now, near
Her nest, she sudden stops, as choking fear
That might betray her home. So even now
We'll leave it as we found it; safety's guard
Of pathless solitudes shall keep it still.

* * * * * *

We will not plunder music of its dower,
Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall,
For melody seems hid in every flower
That blossoms near thy home. These bluebells all
Seem bowing with the beautiful in song;
And gaping cuckoo-flower, with spotted leaves,
Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.
How curious is the nest! No other bird
Uses such loose materials, or weaves
Its dwelling in such spots! Lead oaken leaves

Are placed without, and velvet moss within.
And little scraps of grass, and scant and spare,
What hardly seem materials, down and hair;
For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.

* * * * *

Snug lie her curious eggs, in number five,
Of deadened green, or rather olive-brown,
And the old prickly thorn bush guards them well.
So here we'll leave them, still unknown to wrong,
As the old woodland's legacy of song.

Is not this nature itself? And again another nest, as true every whit in its difference.

THE PETTICHAP'S NEST.

Well! in my many walks I've rarely found
A place less likely for a bird to form
Its nest; close by the rut-gulled waggon-road,
And on the almost bare foot-trodden ground,
With scarce a clump of grass to keep it warm,
Where not a thistle spreads its spears abroad,
Or prickly bush to shield it from harm's way;
And yet so snugly made, that none may spy
It out, save peradventure. You and I
Had surely passed it in our walk to-day,
Had chance not led us by it! Nay, e'en now,
Had not the old bird heard us trampling by,
And fluttered out, we had not seen it lie
Brown as the road-way side. Small bits of hay
Pluckt from the old propt haystack's pleachy brow,
And withered leaves, make up its outward wall,
Which from the gnarled oak-dotterel yearly fall,
And in the old hedge-bottom rot away.
Built like an oven, through a little hole,

Scarcely admitting e'en two fingers in,
Hard to discern, the birds snug entrance win.
'Tis lined 'with feathers,' warm as silken stole,
Softer than seats of down for painless ease,
And full of eggs scarce bigger ev'n than peas.
Here's one most delicate, with spots as small
As dust, and of a faint and pinky red.

* * * *

And they are left to many dangerous ways.
A green grasshopper's jump might break the shells;
Yet lowing oxen pass them morn and night.
And restless sheep around them hourly stray.

* * * *

I add yet another:

THE YELLOWHAMMER'S NEST.

Just by the wooden bridge a bird flew up,
Seen by the cow-boy as he scrambled down
To reach the misty dewberry. Let us stoop
And seek its nest. The brook we need not dread,—
'Tis scarcely deep enough a bee to drown,
And it sings harmless o'er its pebbly bed.
—Ay, here it is! Stuck close beside the bank,
Beneath the bunch of grass that spindles rank
Its husk-seeds tall and high: 'tis rudely planned
Of bleached stubbles and the withered fare
That last year's harvest left upon the land,
Lined thinly with the horse's sable hair.
Five eggs, pen-scribbled o'er with ink their shells,
Resembling writing scrawls, which Fancy reads
As Nature's poesy and pastoral spells:
They are the Yellowhammer's; and she dwells,
Most poet-like, 'mid brooks and flowery weeds.

* * * *

I question if the great bird-painter, Wilson, or our own Australian ornithologist, Mr. Gould (he is a Berkshire man, I am proud to say), or Audubon, or White of Selborne, or Mr. Waterton himself—and all those careful inquirers into nature are more or less poets, seldom as they have used the conventional language of poetry—I question if any of these eminent writers have ever exceeded the minuteness and accuracy of these birds' nests.

The Poem called "Insects" is scarcely less beautiful.

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,
And happy units of a numerous herd
Of playfellows, the laughing summer brings;
Mocking the sunshine on their glittering wings,
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly!
No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose,
And where they fly for dinner no one knows;
The dew-drops feed them not; they love the shine
Of noon, whose suns may bring them golden wine.
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress;
When night reposes they can do no less!
Then to the heath-bell's purple hood they fly,
And, like to princes in their slumbers, lie
Secure from rain and dropping dews, and all
On silken beds and roomy painted hall.
So merrily they spend their summer day,
Now in the corn-fields, now the new-mown hay.
One almost fancies that such happy things,
With coloured hoods and richly-burnished wings,

Are fairy folk in splendid masquerade
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,
Keeping their joyous pranks a mystery still,
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

And as I have said above, other qualities too had supervened. The delicacy of sentiment in the following stanzas bears no touch of the uncultivated peasant.

FIRST LOVE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

First love will with the heart remain
When all its hopes are by,
As frail rose-blossoms still retain
Their fragrance when they die.
And joy's first dreams will haunt the mind
With shades from whence they sprung,
As summer leaves the stems behind
On which spring's blossoms hung.

Mary! I dare not call thee dear,
I've lost that right so long,
Yet once again I vex thine ear
With memory's idle song.
Had time and change not blotted out
The love of former days,
Thou wert the first that I should doubt
Of pleasing with my praise.

When honied tokens from each tongue
Told with what truth we loved,
How rapturous to thy lips I clung,
Whilst nought but smiles reproved.

But now, methinks if one kind word
Was whispered in thine ear,
Thou'dst startle like an untamed bird,
And blush with wilder fear.

How loath to part, how fond to meet,
Had we two used to be,
At sunset with what eager feet
I hastened unto thee!
Scarce nine days passed us ere we met,
In spring, nay, wintry weather;—
Now nine years' suns have risen and set,
Nor found us once together.

Thy face was so familiar grown,
Thyself so often by.
A moment's memory when alone,
Would bring thee to mine eye.
But now my very dreams forget
That witching look to trace;
And though thy beauty lingers yet,
It wears a stranger's face.

I felt a pride to name thy name,
But now that pride hath flown;
My words e'en seem to blush for shame
That own I love thee on.
I felt I then thy heart did share,
Nor urged a binding vow;
But much I doubt if thou couldst spare
One word of kindness now.

And what is now my name to thee,
Though once nought seemed so dear?

Perhaps a jest in hours of glee,
To please some idle ear.
And yet like counterfeits with me
Impressions linger on,
Though all the gilded finery
That passed for truth is gone.

Ere the world smiled upon my lays,
A sweeter meed was mine;
Thy blushing look of ready praise
Was raised at every line.
But now methinks thy fervent love
Is changed to scorn severe;
And songs that other hearts approve,
Seem discord to thine ear.

When last thy gentle cheek I pressed
And heard thee feign adieu,
I little thought that seeming jest
Would prove a word so true.
A fate like this hath oft befell
E'en loftier hopes than ours;—
Spring bids full many buds to swell,
That ne'er can grow to flowers.

That was John Clare's last volume, published in 1839, and although generously noticed by the press, it did not sell. Perhaps the very imperfections of the earlier works had made a part of their charm. There is a certain pleasure in being called upon to show indulgence to one whose high gifts are indisputable. Besides the complacency always attending a sense of superiority of any kind, it flatters one's

self-love most agreeably (I am speaking of readers, not of critics,) to be able to detect and to point out beauties under the veil of defects. Still greater was the pride of being amongst the first discoverers of such endowments. With the novelty that pleasure vanished. Every child boasts the violet of his own finding, and cherishes and caresses it—while it is fresh; then it disappears and is no more thought of. Woe to us if so we treat a still tenderer flower!

However it happened the popularity diminished as the merit increased. The public, usually so just in its ultimate estimate of authors, failed in this particular instance to recognise the strong and honest claim upon a fair and liberal patronage possessed by one who had been taken from his own humble avocation, from the homely work but the certain reward of the plough, to cultivate the always uncertain, and too often barren and unthankful fields of literature. Such, I fear, poor Clare found them. Improvement had come, but with improvement came sickness and anxiety. The little income had soon been found inadequate to the wants of his aged parents, and the demands of an increasing family; for they will marry, these poets! Poverty overwhelmed him, and illness—and they who still took a kindly interest in one who had crept so close to the heart of nature in coppice and in field—heard with sorrowful sympathy that the illness was of the mind.

It has been said that pecuniary difficulties were the real cause of the malady, and that the removal of all anxiety as to the means of living would at once cure the delusions under which he labours, and restore him to his home and to his family. I wish it were so, for I think if that were true, (and certainly the fact ought to be ascertained, as nearly as anything of that nature can be ascertained by medical examination,) that they who so benevolently ent their aid to lift him from his original obscurity, would, aided by others of a like spirit, step forward to rescue from a still deeper darkness one whose alents had so well justified their former bounty.

In the meanwhile it is an alleviation to the painful feeling excited by such a narrative to know that the poor poet, perfectly gentle and harmless, enjoys in the asylum where he is placed, the wise freedom of person and of action which is the triumph of humanity and of science in the present day.

A few years ago he was visited by a friend of mine, himself a poet of the people, who gave me a most interesting account of the then state of his intellect. His delusions were at that time very singular in their character. Whatever he read, whatever recurred to him from his former reading, or happened to be mentioned in conversation, became impressed on his mind as a thing that he had witnessed and acted in. My friend was struck with a narrative of the execution of Charles the First, re-

counted by Clare, as a transaction that occurred yesterday, and of which he was an eye-witness—a narrative of the most graphic and minute, with an accuracy as to costume and manners far exceeding what would probably have been at his command if sane. It is such a lucidity as the disciples of Mesmer claim for clairvoyance. Or he would relate the battle of the Nile, and the death of Lord Nelson with the same perfect keeping, especially as to seamanship, fancying himself one of the sailors who had been in the action, and dealing out nautical phrases with admirable exactness and accuracy, although it is doubtful if he ever saw the sea in his life.

About three years before my friend's visit, Mr. Cyrus Redding went to see him, and has given a very interesting description of the poet, and of his state of mind, in the "English Journal." He says that during his stay he appeared free from all delusion, except once when some allusion was made to prize-fighting, and represents him as regretting the absence of female society, and as continuing to write verse of much merit. I have myself some fragments, written with a pencil, which show all his old power over rhythm.*

* About a hundred years ago, Christopher Smart, seized with a similar malady, confined in a madhouse, and deprived of the use of pen, ink, and paper, contrived to indent his

Mr. Redding gives several examples of these poems. They are distinguished from those of his earlier days by several differences, especially by the change from the rich level meadows of Northamptonshire to the hill and dale of Epping Forest. Here is one which is said to be reminiscent of his Patty:

Song of David upon the wainscot with the end of a key. I add three stanzas of this fine poem as a psychological curiosity. Times are changed for the better. John Clare has all encouragement to write as often and as much as he chooses.

He sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force,
On which all strength depends;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes
All period, power, and enterprise,
Commences, reigns, and ends.
The world, the clustering spheres he made,
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where Secresy remains in bliss,
And Wisdom hides her skill.
Tell them I Am, Jehovah said,
To Moses; whilst earth heard in dread,
And smitten to the heart,
At once above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, O Lord, Thou art!

Devotional poetry has nothing grander even in Milton.

Maid of Walkherd meet again
By the wilding in the glen;
By the oak against the door,
Where we often met before.
By thy bosom's heaving snow,
By thy fondness love shall know;
Maid of Walkherd meet again
By the wilding in the glen.
By thy hand of slender make,
By thy love I'll ne'er forsake,
By thy heart I'll ne'er betray,
Let me kiss thy tears away.
I will live and love thee ever,
Love thee and forsake thee never,
Though far in other lands to be,
Yet never far from love and thee.

The next specimen has much of his fine observation of natural objects, and his old love of birds breaks through everything:—

The forest meets the blessings of the spring,
The chesnut throws her sticky buds away,
And shows her pleasant leaves and snow-white flowers.

* * * * *

I've often tried, when tending sheep or cow,
With bits of grass and peels of oaten straw,
To whistle like the birds. The thrush would start
To hear her song of praise, and fly away;
The blackbird never cared, but sang again;
The nightingale's pure song I could not try,
And when the thrush would mock her song, she paused,
And sang another song no bird could do:
She sang when all were done, and beat them all.

I've often sat, and watched them half the day
Behind the hedgerow thorn or bullace-tree;
I thought how nobly I would act in crowds,
The woods and fields were all the books I knew,
And every leisure thought was love or fame.

There is some intention, I believe, of publishing a volume of these poems. It will be interesting on many accounts, and for the sake of the poet and of his family, I heartily wish it every success.

We cannot, I repeat, do too much for John Clare; he has a claim to it as a man of genius suffering under the severest visitation of Providence. But let us beware of indulging ourselves by encouraging the class of pseudo-peasant poets who spring up on every side, and are amongst the most pitiable objects in creation. One knows them by sight upon the pathway, from their appearance of vagrant misery—an appearance arising from the sense of injustice and of oppression under which they suffer, the powerless feeling that they have claims which the whole world refuses to acknowledge, a perpetual and growing sense of injury. It is worse insanity than John Clare's, and one for which there is no asylum. Victims to their own day-dreams, are they! They have heard of Burns and of Chatterton; they have a certain knack of rhyming, although even that is by no means necessary to such a delusion; they find an audience whom their intense faith in their own power conspires to delude; and

their quiet, their content, their every prospect is ruined for ever. It is this honest and unconquerable persuasion of their own genius that makes it impossible to reason with or convince them. Their faith in their own powers—their racking sense of the injustice of all about them, makes one's heart ache. It is impossible for the sternest or the sturdiest teller of painful truths to disenchant them, and the consequence is as obvious as it is miserable. For that shadow every substance is foregone. They believe poetry to be their work, and they will do no other. Then comes utter poverty. They haunt the ale-house, they drink, they sicken, they starve. I have known many such.

Happily there is one cure, not for individual cases, but for the entire class; a slow but a sure remedy. Let the sunlight in, and the night-phantoms vanish. Education, wide and general, not mere learning to read, but making discreet and wise use of the power, and the nuisance will be abated at once and for ever. Let our peasants become as intelligent as our artisans, and we shall have no more prodigies, no more martyrs.

XI.

AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Most undoubtedly I was a spoilt child. When I recollect certain passages of my thrice happy early life, I cannot have the slightest doubt about the matter, although it contradicts all foregone conclusions, all nursery and school-room morality to say so. But facts are stubborn things. Spoilt I was. Everybody spoilt me, most of all the person whose power in that way was greatest, the dear papa himself. Not content with spoiling me in-doors, he spoilt me out. How well I remember his carrying me round the orchard on his shoulder, holding fast my little three-year-old feet, whilst the little hands hung on to his pig-tail, which I called my bridle (those were days of pig-tails), hung so fast, and tugged so heartily, that sometimes the ribbon

would come off between my fingers, and send his hair floating, and the powder flying down his back. That climax of mischief was the crowning joy of all. I can hear our shouts of laughter now.

Nor were these my only rides. This dear papa of mine, whose gay and careless temper all the professional etiquette of the world could never tame into the staid gravity proper to a doctor of medicime, happened to be a capital horseman; and abandoning the close carriage, which, at that time, was the regulation conveyance of a physician, almost wholly to my mother, used to pay his country visits on a favourite blood-mare, whose extreme docility and gentleness tempted him, after certain short trials round our old course, the orchard, into having a pad constructed, perched upon which I might occasionally accompany him, when the weather was favourable, and the distance not too great. A groom, who had been bred up in my grandfather's family, always attended us; and I do think that both Brown Bess and George liked to have me with them almost as well as my father did. The old servant proud, as grooms always are of a fleet and beautiful horse, was almost as proud of my horsemanship; for I, cowardly enough, Heaven knows, in after years, was then too young and too ignorant for fear—if it could have been possible to have had any sense of danger when strapped so

tightly to my father's saddle, and enclosed so fondly by his strong and loving arm. Very delightful were those rides across the breezy Hampshire downs on a sunny summer morning; and grieved was I when a change of residence from a small town to a large one, and going among strange people who did not know our ways, put an end to this perfectly harmless, if somewhat unusual, pleasure.

But the dear papa was not my only spoiler. His example was followed, as bad examples are pretty sure to be, by the rest of the household. My maid Nancy, for instance, before we left Hampshire, married a young farmer; and nothing would serve her but I must be bridesmaid. And so it was settled.

She was married from her own home, about four miles from our house, and was to go to her husband's after the ceremony. I remember the whole scene as if it were yesterday! How my father took me himself to the churchyard-gate, where the procession was formed, and how I walked next to the young couple hand in hand with the bridegroom's man, no other than the village blacksmith, a giant of six feet three, who might have served as a model for Hercules. Much trouble had he to stoop low enough to reach down to my hand; and many were the rustic jokes passed upon the disproportioned pair, who might fitly have repre-

sented Brobdignag and Lilliput. My tall colleague proved, however, as well-natured as giants commonly are everywhere but in fairy tales, and took as good care of his little partner as if she had been a proper match for him in age and size.

In this order, followed by the parents on both sides, and a due number of uncles, aunts, and cousins, we entered the church, where I held the glove with all the gravity and importance proper to my office; and so contagious is emotion, and so accustomed was I to sympathise with Nancy, that when the bride cried, I could not help crying for company. But it was a love-match, and between smiles and blushes Nancy's tears soon disappeared, and so by the same contagion did mine. The happy husband helped his pretty wife into her own chaise-cart, my friend the blacksmith lifted me in after her, and we drove gaily to the large, comfortable farm-house where her future life was to be spent.

It was a bright morning in May, and I still remember when we drove up to the low wall which parted the front garden from the winding village road, the mixture of affection and honest pride which lighted up the face of the owner. The square, substantial brick house, covered with a vine, the brick porch garlanded with honeysuckles and sweet-briar, the espalier apple-trees on either side the path in full flower, the double row of thrift with its

dull pink bloom, the stocks and wallflowers under the window, the huge barns full of corn, the stacks of all shapes and sizes in the rick-yard, cows and sheep and pigs and poultry told a pleasant tale of rural comfort and rural affluence.

The bride was taken to survey her new dominions by her proud bridegroom, and the blacksmith finding me, I suppose, easier to carry than to lead, followed close upon their steps with me in his arms.

Nothing could exceed the good-nature of my country beau; he pointed out bantams and peafowls, and took me to see a tame lamb and a tall, staggering calf, born that morning; but for all that, I do not think I should have submitted so quietly to the indignity of being carried, I, who had ridden thither on Brown Bess, and was at that instant filling the ostensible place of bridesmaid, if it had not been for the chastening influence of a little touch of fear. Entering the poultry-yard I had caught sight of a certain turkey-cock, who erected that circular tail of his, and swelled out his deep-red comb and gills after a fashion familiar to that truculent bird, but which up to the present hour I am far from admiring. A turkey at Christmas well roasted with bread sauce, may have his merits; but if I meet him alive in his feathers, especialy when he swells them out and sticks up his tail, I commonly get out of his way even now,

much more sixty years ago. So I let the blacksmith carry me.

Then we went to the dairy, so fresh and cool and clean—glittering with cleanliness! overflowing with creamy riches! and there I had the greatest enjoyment of my whole day, the printing with my own hands a pat of butter, and putting it up in a little basket covered with a vine leaf, to take home for the dear mamma's tea. Then we should have gone to the kitchen, the back kitchen, the brew-house, the washhouse, and the rest of the bride's new territories, but this part of the domicile was literally too hot to hold us; the cooking of the great wedding dinner was in full activity, and the bridegroom himself was forced to retreat before his notable mother, who had come to superintend all things for the day.

So we drew back to the hall, a large square bricked apartment, with a beam across the ceiling, a wide yawning chimney, and wooden settles with backs to them; where many young people being assembled, and one of them producing a fiddle, it was agreed to have a country-dance until dinner should be ready, the bride and bridegroom leading off, and I following with the bridegroom's man.

Oh, the blunders, the confusion, the merriment of that country-dance! No two people attempted the same figure; few aimed at any figure at all; each went his own way; many stumbled; some fell,

and everybody capered, laughed and shouted at once. My partner prudently caught me up in his arms again, for fear of my being knocked down and danced over, which, considering some of the exploits of some of the performers, seemed by no means impossible, and would have been a worse catastrophe than an onslaught of the turkey-cock.

A summons to dinner put an end to the glee. Such a dinner. The plenty of Camacho's wedding was but a type of my Nancy's. Fish from the great pond, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, boiled fowls and a gammon of bacon, a green goose and a sucking-pig, plum puddings, apple pies, cheese-cakes and custards, formed a part of the bill of fare, followed by home-brewed beer and home-made wine, by syllabub, and by wedding cake. Everybody ate enough for four, and there was four times more than could by any possibility be eaten. I have always thought it one of the strongest proofs of sense and kindness in my pretty maid, that she rescued me from the terrible hospitality of her mother-in-law, and gave me back unscathed into my father's hands, when about three o'clock he arrived to reclaim me.

The affluence and abundance of that gala day—the great gala of a life-time—in that Hampshire farm-house, I have never seen surpassed.

This was my first appearance as a bridesmaid.

My next, which took place about a twelvemonth after, was of a very different description.

A first cousin of my father, the daughter of his uncle and guardian, had by the death of her mother's brother become a wealthy heiress; and leaving her picturesque old mansion in Northumberland, Little Harle Tower, a true border keep overhanging the Warsbeck, for a journey to what the Northumbrians of that day emphatically called "the South," came after a season in London to pass some months with us. At our house she became acquainted with the brother of a Scotch Duke, an Oxford student, who, passing the long vacation with his mother, had nothing better to do than to fall in love. Each had what the other wanted — the lady money, the gentleman rank; and as his family were charmed with the match, and hers, had neither the power nor the wish to oppose it, everything was arranged with as little delay as lawyers, jewellers, coachmakers, and mantua-makers would permit.

How the first step in the business, the inevitable and awful ceremonial of a declaration of love and a proposal of marriage, was ever brought about, has always been to me one of the most unsolvable of mysteries—an enigma without the word.

Lord Charles, as fine a young man as one should see in a summer's day, tall, well made, with handsome features, fair capacity, excellent education, and

charming temper, had an infirmity which went nigh to render all these good gifts of no avail: a shyness, a bashfulness, a timidity most painful to himself, and distressing to all about him. It is not uncommon to hear a quiet, silent man of rank, unjustly suspected of pride and haughtiness; but there could be no such mistake here—his shamefacedness was patent to all men. I myself, a child not five years old, one day threw him into an agony of blushing, by running up to his chair in mistake for my papa. Now I was a shy child, a very shy child, and as soon as I arrived in front of his Lordship, and found that I had been misled by a resemblance of dress, by the blue coat and buff waistcoat, I first of all crept under the table, and then flew to hide my face in my mother's lap; my poor fellow-sufferer, too big for one place of refuge, too old for the other, had nothing for it but to run away, which the door being luckily open, he happily accomplished.

That a man with such a temperament, who could hardly summon courage to say "How d'ye do?" should ever have wrought himself up to the point of putting the great question, was wonderful enough; that he should have submitted himself to undergo the ordeal of what was called in those days a public wedding, was more wonderful still.

Perhaps the very different temper of the lady may offer some solution to the last of these riddles; perhaps (I say it in all honour, for there is no shame

in offering some encouragement to a bashful suitor) it may assist us in expounding them both.

Of a certainty, my fair cousin was pre-eminently gifted with those very qualities in which her lover was deficient. Everything about her was prompt and bright, cheerful and self-possessed. Nearly as tall as himself, and quite as handsome, it was of the beauty that is called showy—a showy face, a showy figure, a showy complexion. We felt at a glance that those radiant, well-opened hazel eyes, had never quailed before mortal glance, and that that clear round cheek, red and white like a daisy, had never been guilty of a blush in its whole life. Handsome as she was, it was a figure that looked best in a riding-habit, and a face that of all head-dresses best became a beaver hat; just a face and figure for a procession; she would not have minded a coronation; on the contrary, she would have been enchanted to have been a queen-regnant; but as a coronation was out of the question, she had no objection, taking the publicity as a part of the happiness, to a wedding as grand as the resources of a country town could make it.

So a wedding procession was organised, after the fashion of Sir Charles Grandison, comprising the chief members of each family, especially of the ducal one; an infinite number of brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, cousins and clansfolk, friends and acquaintances, all arranged in different carriages, according

to their rank; ladies, gentlemen, servants, and horses, decorated with white and silver favours, in so long a line, that it extended from Coley Avenue to St. Mary's Church. The first carriage, a low phaeton, drawn by ponies led by grooms, containing three children, two of five and six years old, niece and nephew of the bridegroom, who, with myself (already a lady of experience in that line), were to officiate as bride-maidens and bridegroom's man; the last, also an open carriage, with only the bride and my dear papa, who gave her away.

How well I recollect the crowd of the street, the crowd of the churchyard, the crowd of the church! There was no crying at this wedding though: no crying, and far fewer smiles.

The young couple proceeded to Bath and Clifton from the church door; and the rest of the procession returned to our house to eat bridecake, drink to the health of the new-married pair, and be merry at their leisure; after which many dispersed, but the members of the two families and the more intimate friends remained to dinner; and in the confusion of preparing to entertain so large a party, the servants, even those belonging to the nursery, were engaged in different ways, and we children left to our own devices, and finding nearly the whole house free to our incursions, betook ourselves to a game at hide and seek.

Now in honour of the day, and of the grand part

we had filled in the grand ceremony of the morning, we small people had been arrayed in white from top to toe, Master Martin in a new suit of jean, richly braided, his sister and myself in clear muslin frocks, edged with lace, and long Persian sashes, the whole width of the silk, fringed with silver, whilst all parties, little boy and little girls, had white beaver hats and heavy ostrich plumes. We young ladies had, as a matter of course, that instinctive respect for our own finery which seems an innate principle in womankind; moreover, we were very good children, quiet, orderly, and obedient. Master Martin, on the other hand, our elder by a year, had some way or other imbibed the contempt at once for fine clothes and for the authorities of the nursery, which is not uncommon amongst his rebellious sex; so the first time it fell to his lot to hide, he ensconced himself in the very innermost recesses of the coalhole, from which delightful retirement he was dragged, after a long search, by his own maid, who had at last awakened from the joys of gossiping and making believe to help in the housekeeper's room, to the recollection that Lady Mary might possibly inquire after her children. The state of his apparel and of her temper may be more easily imagined than described. He, Duke's grandson though he were, looking like nothing better or worse than a chimney-sweeper. She stormed like a fury. But as all the storming in the world would not restore the young

gentleman or his bridal suit to their pristine state of cleanliness, she took wit in her anger and put him to bed, as a measure partly of punishment partly of concealment;—the result of which was that he, the culprit, thoroughly tired with excitement and exercise, with play and display, and well stuffed with dainties to keep him quiet, was consigned to his comfortable bed, whilst we pattern little girls had to undergo the penalty of making our appearance and our courtesies in the drawing-room, amongst all the fine folks of *our* Camacho's wedding, and to stay there, weariest of the many weary, two or three hours beyond our accustomed time. With so little justice are the rewards and punishments of this world distributed—even in the nursery!

Not long after this I made my first visit to London, under the auspices and in company of the dear papa. Business called him thither in the middle of July, and he suddenly announced his intention of driving me up in his gig—such was the then word for a high, open carriage holding two persons!—unencumbered by any other companion, male or female. George only, the old groom, was sent forward with a spare horse over-night to Maidenhead Bridge (ah! that charming inn is un-inned now-a-days by the railways!), and the dear papa, conforming to my nursery hours, we dined at Cranford Bridge (I dare say that that hotel, with its pretty garden and its Portugal laurels, has disap-

peared also,) and reached Hatchett's Hotel, Piccadilly (the New White Horse Cellar of the old stage-coaches) early in the afternoon. There a steady, civil barmaid undertook the care of me during our stay; but, as he had foreseen, I was too much awake and alive with novelty and amusement, too strong in my happiness, to want anybody to take care of me, except the dear papa himself.

I had enjoyed the drive past all expression, chattering all the way, and falling into no other mistakes than those common to larger people than myself, of thinking that London began at Brentford, and wondering in Piccadilly when the crowd would go by; and I was so little tired when we arrived, that, to lose no time, we betook ourselves that night to the Haymarket Theatre, the only one then open. I had been at plays in the country, in a barn in Hampshire, and at a regular theatre at our new home, and I loved them dearly with that confiding and uncritical pleasure which is the wisest and the best. But the country play was nothing to the London play—a lively comedy, with the rich cast of those days—one of the comedies that George III. enjoyed so heartily. I enjoyed it as much as he, and laughed and clapt my hands, and danced on my father's knee, and almost screamed with delight, so that a party in the same box, who had begun by being half-angry at my restlessness, finished by being amused with my amusement.

The next day, my father having an appointment at the Bank, took the opportunity of showing me St. Paul's and the Tower.

At St. Paul's, I saw all the wonders of the place: whispered in the whispering-gallery, and walked up the tottering wooden stairs, not into the ball itself, but to the circular balustrade of the highest gallery beneath it. I have never been there since, but I can still recall most vividly that wonderful panorama, the strange diminution produced by the distance, the toylike carriages and horses, and men and women moving noiselessly through the toy-like streets; and (although not frightened then) still more vividly do I recall the dangerous state of the decaying stairs, the swaying rope to hold by, the light showing through the crevices of the wood. My father held me carefully by the hand; and I have no recollection of having felt the slightest fear; nevertheless the impression of danger must have been very great since for many years of my life falling through *those* stairs was my bad dream, the dream that gives such sure warning of physical ill, when fever is impending, or any derangement occurs in the system. Then we proceeded to the Tower, that place so striking by force of contrast; its bright lights and strong shadows; the jewels, the armour, the armoury, glittering in stern magnificence amidst the gloom of the old fortress, and the stories of great personages imprisoned, be-

headed, buried within its walls;—a dreary thing it seemed to be a Queen! But at night I went to Astley's, and I forgot the sorrows of Lady Jane Grey and Anne Boleyn in the wonders of the horsemanship, and the tricks of the clown. After all, Astley's, although very well in its way, was not the play, and we agreed that the next night, the last we were to spend in London, we would go again to the Haymarket.

Into that last day we crowded all the sight-seeing possible, the Houses of Lords and Commons, where I sat upon the woolsack and in the Speaker's chair, about the smallest person, I suppose, that ever filled those eminent seats. Then Westminster Abbey, where, besides the glorious old building and the tombs, figured at that time certain figures in waxwork, Queen Anne and Queen Elizabeth as ugly as life, and General Monk holding out his cap for money. I remember my father giving me a shilling to drop in as our share of the contribution, and my wondering what became of it (are those figures in existence now? and does the General still hold forth the eleemosynary cap?) Thence we proceeded to Cox's Museum in Spring Gardens, and saw and heard a little bird, who seemed made of diamonds and rubies, who clapt his wings and sang. There too (it was a place full of strange deceptions) I sate down upon a chair, and the cushion forthwith began to squeak like a cat and kittens, so like

a cat and kittens that I more than half expected to be scratched. And then to the Leverian Museum in the Blackfriars Road, a delightful abode of birds and butterflies, where I saw dead and stuffed with a reality that wanted nothing but life, nearly all the beautiful creatures that little girls see now alive at the Zoological. The promised visit to the Haymarket Theatre formed a fit conclusion to this day of enchantment. We saw another capital comedy (I think Colman's "Heir at Law") capitally acted, and laughed until we could laugh no longer. And then the next day we drove home without a moment's weariness of mind or body.

Such was my first journey to London.

Upon looking back to that journey of nearly sixty years ago, what strikes me most is the small dimensions to which the capital of England was then confined, compared with those which it now covers. When I stood on the topmost gallery of St. Paul's, I saw a compact city, spreading along the river, it is true, from Billingsgate to Westminster, but clearly defined to the north and to the south, the West End beginning at Hyde Park Corner, and bordered by Hyde Park on the one side and the Green Park on the other. Then, in spite of my mistaking the stones of Brentford for the stones of London, Belgravia was a series of pastures, and Paddington a village. Now squares and terraces are closing round the terminus of the Great

Western, and the stateliest mansions of the metropolis cover the green fields which separated Sloane Street from Pimlico. People wonder at the size of the Great Exhibition, but the town of which it forms a part, that great throbbing heart of a great nation, seems to me more wonderful far. To describe London as it is, or even in a few pages to enumerate the sights which we should show to a child now would be as impossible a task as to crowd into the same place the marvels contained in Mr. Paxton's wonderful house of glass.

Far more impossible! for a very few lines would comprise the chief impression produced upon me when escorted by my excellent friend Mr. Lucas, and guided by the fine taste of that most tasteful of painters, I walked through the Great Exhibition this summer. Next perhaps to the building itself, with the statues and hangings to which it owes its distinctive character, and the fountains and people who give to it movement and life;—next to the vastness, the lightness, the exquisite fitness of the building; and excepting perhaps only that triumph of modern sculpture — Kiss's bold, expressive, impassioned group—that which most filled the eye and the mind seemed to me to be the Indian tissues, however called, with their delicious harmony of colour, and their strange power of interweaving the precious metals with their silken textures. There is one shawl where upon a white ground the same pattern

is repeated now in gold and now in silver, which seems to me actually to emit light. Those Indian draperies are poems which have no need of words, forms invented thousands of years ago, and repeated from dynasty to dynasty, from empire to empire. So are those Tunisian vases, forms of ineffable grace such as may have been carried to the fountain or the well by the captive queens of Grecian fable or the Hebrew maidens of sacred history. Is it that those ancient notions of the East and of the South have in them the great principle of permanence which is a sort of earthly immortality? that having once seized the Beautiful, they are content to abide by it and to produce and reproduce the same grace of form and harmony of colour, just as nature herself is content to produce and reproduce her marvels of vegetable life, her lotus on the river, her magnolia in the wood? If so, let us strive to copy them, not in such a combination of hues, or such lines of contour, but in the greater wisdom of loving and admiring beauty because it is beautiful, and not because according to the caprice of the hour it happens to be new or to be old.

It is now full time to come to Dr. Johnson.

The London which I saw sixty years ago was not materially different from that in which he had lived and reigned—the king of conversation and almost of literature. One proof of this supremacy was

afforded at that very time when my father, by no means a bookish man and a most ardent Whig, stopped the coach two or three times during our drive to the Bank, to show me Bolt Court and various other courts distinguished by the residence of the great lexicographer. Boswell's inimitable life had of course its share in this interest; but independently of that remarkable book the feeling was deep and was general; and when we consider that the society of which he was the acknowledged head comprised such names as Burke, and Fox, and Reynolds, and Goldsmith, we cannot doubt but in spite of his virulent prejudices, his absurd superstition, and his latinised English, Samuel Johnson was not only a good man but a great man.

One who was pre-eminently both, Dr. Channing, Republican by nation and opinion, Unitarian by creed, has a passage relating to Johnson, which, while alleging nearly all that can be said against him, always struck me as admirable for justice and for candour—the candour of an adversary and an opponent. It occurs in a "Review of the Writings and Character of Milton," in which the American author had, as matter of course, controverted the decisions of the English critic. He says—I omit much that relates only to Milton—he says:

"We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the *manes* of another. He did not and he could not

appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively of the earth, whilst Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary in the day of Johnson's glory to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. * * * In religion, Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned to absolute power, and the idea of reforming either never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. How could Johnson be just to Milton? The comparison which we have instituted has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects; but we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action and the solemn pathos which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history command our willing admiration.

That he wanted enthusiasm and creative imagination and lofty sentiment was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect; for they were results to a degree which man cannot estimate of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy, physical temperament, and belonged to the body more than to the mind." So far the great American. Would that all critics had his charity!

In none of Dr. Channing's praises of Johnson do I join more cordially than in the admiration with which he speaks of his occasional references to his own history. I subjoin the letter to Lord Chesterfield which comprises so many of the distinguishing characteristics of his style, together with a pungency, a truth, and a pathos which belong even more to personal character than to literary power. It explains itself:

"My Lord,

"I have lately been informed by the proprietor of 'The World,' that two papers in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When upon some slight encouragement I first

visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre,* that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all I could: and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

"The Shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased

to take of my labours, had it been early had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work, therefore, with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most humble,

"Most obedient servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

My concluding extract is of a very different description—as different as the character and situation of the two persons to whom the letter and the stanzas relate. These verses again tell their own story, though they do not tell the whole, for Johnson, poor himself, was to the poor apothecary a generous patron and an unfailing friend. The poem has much of the homely pathos, the graphic truth of Crabbe,

and is so free from manner, that it might rather pass for his than Dr. Johnson's.

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT LEVETT.

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blast or slow decline
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levett to the grave descend
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills Affection's eye
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind,
Nor lettered arrogance deny
Thy praise to merit undefined.

When fainting Nature called for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy displayed
The power of Art without the show.

In misery's darkest caverns known,
His ready help was ever nigh,
Where helpless anguish poured his groan,
And lonely want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,
No petty gains disdained by pride;
The modest wants of every day,
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause nor left a void;
And sure the Eternal Master found,
His single talent well employed.

The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no throbs of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay;
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

XII.

OLD POETS.

ROBERT HERRICK—GEORGE WITHERS.

NOTHING seems stranger in the critics of the last century than their ignorance of the charming lyrical poetry of the times of the early Stuarts and the Commonwealth. One should think that the songs of the great dramatists, whose genius they did acknowledge—Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson—might have prepared them to recognise the kindred melodies of such versifiers as Marlowe and Raleigh and Wither and Marvell. His Jacobite prejudices might have predisposed Dr. Johnson in particular to find some harmonious stanzas in the minstrels of the cavaliers, Lovelace and the Marquis of Montrose. But so complete is the silence in which the writers of that day pass over these glorious songsters, that it seems only

charitable to suppose that these arbiters of taste had never met with their works. With the honourable exceptions of Thomas Warton and Bishop Percy, there is not a critic from Johnson downward who does not cite Waller as the first poet who smoothed our rugged tongue into harmonious verse. And the prejudice lingers still in places where one does not expect to find it. The parish clerk of Beaconsfield is by no means the only, although by far the most excusable authority who, standing bare-headed before his pyramidal tomb in the church-yard, assured me with the most honest conviction that Waller was the earliest and finest versifier in the language.

Herrick is one of the many whose lyrics might be called into court to overturn this verdict. Originally bred to the bar, he took orders at a comparatively late period, and obtained a living in Devonshire, from which he fled during the strict rule of the Lord Protector, concealing himself under a lay habit in London, and returning to his parsonage with the return of the monarch, whose birth had formed the subject of one of his earliest pastorals.

More than any eminent writer of that day Herrick's collection requires careful sifting; but there is so much fancy, so much delicacy, so much grace, that a good selection would well repay the publisher. Bits there are that are exquisite: as when

in enumerating the cates composing "Oberon's Feast" in his "Fairyland," he includes, amongst a strange farrago of unimaginable dishes,

> "The broke heart of a nightingale
> O'ercome in music."

Some of his pieces, too, contain curious illustrations of the customs, manners, and prejudices of our ancestors. I shall quote one or two from the division of the Hesperides that he calls "charms and ceremonies," beginning with the motto:

DIVINATION BY A DAFFODIL.

When a daffodil I see,
Hanging down his head toward me,
Guess I may what I may be;
First, I shall decline my head,
Secondly, I shall be dead;
Lastly, safely buried.

The adorning the houses with evergreens seems then to have been as common as our own habit of decking them with flowers.

CEREMONIES FOR CANDLEMAS EVE.

Down with rosemary and bays,
Down with the mistletoe,
Instead of holly now upraise
The greener box for show.

The holly hitherto did sway;
Let box now domineer,
Until the dancing Easter day
Or Easter's Eve appear,

Then youthful box, which now has grace
Your houses to renew,
Grown old, surrender must his place
Unto the crisped yew.

When yew is out, then birch comes in
And many flowers beside,
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin
To honour Whitsuntide.

Green rushes then and sweetest bents,
With cooler oaken boughs,
Come in for comely ornaments
To re-adorn the house.
Thus times do shift; each thing his turn does hold,
New things succeed as former things grow old.

THE BELLMAN.

From noise of scare-fires rest ye free,
From murders Benedicite;
From all mischances that may fright
Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
Mercy secure ye all, and keep
The goblin from ye while ye sleep.
Past one o'clock, and almost two,
My masters all, good day to you!

The description of a steer in one of his "Bucolics" is graphic and life-like. The herdswoman is lamenting the loss of her favourite.

I have lost my lovely steer,
That to me was far more dear
Than these kine that I milk here;
Broad of forehead, large of eye,
Party-coloured like a pie,
Smooth in each limb as a die;
Clear of hoof, and clear of horn,
Sharply pointed as a thorn;
With a neck by yoke unworn,
From the which hung down by strings,
Balls of cowslip, daisy rings
Interlaced by ribbonings.
Faultless every way for shape,
Not a straw could him escape,
Ever gamesome as an ape,
But yet harmless as a sheep.
Pardon, Lacon, if I weep.

* * * * *

But his real delight was amongst flowers and bees, and nymphs and cupids; and certainly these graceful subjects were never handled more gracefully.

THE CAPTIVE BEE.

As Julia once a slumbering lay,
It chanced a bee did fly that way,
After a dew or dew-like shower,
To tipple freely in a flower.

For some rich flower he took the lip
Of Julia and began to sip;
But when he felt he sucked from thence
Honey, and in the quintessence,
He drank so much he scarce could stir,
So Julia took the pilferer.
And thus surprised, as filchers use,
He thus began himself to excuse:
"Sweet lady-flower! I never brought
Hither the least one thieving thought;
But, taking those rose-lips of yours
For some fresh fragrant luscious flowers,
I thought I there might take a taste
Where so much syrup ran at waste.
Besides, know this, I never sting
The flower that gives me nourishing;
But with a kiss or thanks do pay
For honey that I bear away."
This said, he laid his little scrip
Of honey 'fore her ladyship;
And told her, as some tears did fall,
That that he took, and that was all.
At which she smiled, and bade him go
And take his bag; but thus much know,
When next he came a pilfering so,
He should from her full lips derive
Honey enough to fill his hive.

THE BAG OF THE BEE.

About the sweet bag of a bee
Two cupids fell at odds;
And whose the pretty prize should be,
They vowed to ask the gods.

Which, Venus hearing, thither came,
And for their boldness stript them;
And taking thence from each his flame,
With rods of myrtle whipt them.

Which done, to still their wanton cries
When quiet grown she'd seen them,
She kissed and wiped their dove-like eyes,
And gave the bag between them.

TO THE WILLOW TREE.

Thou art to all lost love the best
The only true plant found,
Wherewith young men and maids, distrest
And left of love, are crowned.

When once the lover's rose is dead
Or laid aside forlorn,
Then willow garlands 'bout the head,
Bedewed with tears are worn.

When with neglect the lover's bane
Poor maids rewarded be
For their love lost; their only gain
Is but a wreath from thee.

And underneath thy cooling shade,
When weary of the light,
The love-spent youth and love-sick maid
Come to weep out the night.

* * * * *

THE FUNERAL RITES OF THE ROSE.

The rose was sick, and smiling died;
And being to be sanctified,
About the bed there sighing stood
The sweet and flowery sisterhood.
Some hung the head, while some did bring,
To wash her, water from the spring;
Some laid her forth, while others wept,
But all a solemn fast there kept.
The holy sisters some among
The sacred dirge and trental sung;
But ah! what sweets smelt everywhere
As heaven had spent all perfumes there!
At last, when prayers for the dead
And rites were all accomplished,
They, weeping, spread a lawny loom,
And closed her up, as in a tomb.

SONG.

Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may,
  Old Time is still a flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
  To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
  The higher he's a getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
  The nearer he's to setting.

The age is best which is the first,
  When youth and blood are warmer;

But, being spent, the worse and worse
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And, whilst ye may, go marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

TO MEADOWS.

Ye have been fresh and green,
Ye have been filled with flowers;
And ye the walks have been,
Where maids have spent their hours.

Ye have beheld where they
With wicker arks did come;
To kiss and bear away
The richer cowlips home.

You've heard them sweetly sing,
And seen them in a round;
Each virgin, like the spring,
With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here,
Whose silvery feet did tread;
And, with dishevelled hair,
Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifts having spent
Your stock, and needy grown;
You're left here to lament,
Your poor estates alone.

TO DAFFODILS.

Fair daffodils, we weep to see,
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early rising sun,
Has not attained its noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run,
But to the even song,
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain,
Or, as the pearls of morning dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

THE NIGHT-PIECE.—TO JULIA.

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee;
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No will-o'-th'-wisp mislight thee;
Nor snake, nor slow-worm bite thee;
But on, on thy way,
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there is none to affright thee,

Let not the dark thee cumber,
What though the moon doth slumber?
The stars of the night,
Will lend thee their light,
Like tapers clear without number.

TO BLOSSOMS.

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past
But you may stay yet here awhile,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth,
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And after they have shown their pride,
Like you, awhile they glide
Into the grave.

The want in these graceful and delicate lyrics is thew and sinew. And yet they are what they pretend to be—airy petals of the cherry-blossom, hinting of fruit, bees fluttering and musical, giving token of honey.

The Muse fares ill in civil contentions. As Herrick fled before the Roundheads, so was George Wither oppressed by the Cavaliers. The following noble praise of poetry was written in a prison; in a prison the poor poet passed many of his latter years, and it is still a question whether he actually died in confinement, or perished of want and misery after his release.

But alas! my muse is slow;
For thy pace she flags too low.
But though for her sake I'm curst,
Though my best hopes I have lost,
And knew she would make my trouble,
Ten times more than ten times double;
I would love and keep her too,
Spite of all the world could do.
For though banished from my flocks,
And confined within these rocks,
Here I waste away the light,
And consume the sullen night;
She doth for my comfort stay,
And keeps many cares away.
Though I miss the flowery fields,
And those sweets the spring-tide yields;
Though I may not see those groves,
Where the shepherds chaunt their loves,

And the lasses more excel
Than the sweet-voiced Philomel;
Though of all those pleasures past
Nothing now remains at last,
But remembrance, poor relief
That more makes than mends my grief;
She's my mind's companion still
Maugre Envy's evil will:
Whence she should be driven too,
Were't in mortal's power to do.
She doth tell me where to borrow
Comfort in the midst of sorrow;
Makes the desolatest place
In her presence be a grace;
And the blackest discontents
Be her fairest ornaments.
In my former days of bliss
Her divine skill taught me this,
That from every thing I saw
I could some invention draw;
And raise Pleasure to her height
Through the meanest object's sight:
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least boughs rustling;
By a daisy, whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed;
On a shady bush or tree
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.
By her help I also now
Make this churlish place allow
Some things, that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness:

The dull loneness, the black shade
That these hanging vaults have made,
The strange music of the waves
Beating on these hollow caves,
This black den, which rocks emboss
Overgrown with eldest moss;
The rude portals that give light
More to terror than delight;
This my chamber of neglect
Walled about with disrespect;
From all these, and this dull air
A fit object for despair,
She hath brought me by her might
To draw comfort and delight.
Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,
I will cherish thee for this!
Poetry, thou sweet'st content
That e'er Heaven to mortals lent;
Though they as a trifle leave thee
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee;
Though thou be to them a scorn
That for nought but earth are born;
Let my life no longer be
Than I am in love with thee!
Though our wise ones call it madness,
Let me never taste of gladness
If I love not thy maddest fits
Above all their greatest wits!
And though some, too seeming holy,
Do account thy raptures folly,
Thou dost teach me to contemn
What makes knaves and fools of them!

"The praises of poetry have been often sung in

ancient and modern times; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged; but before Wither no one had celebrated its power *at home;* the wealth and the strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor." This fine criticism, worthy of the poetry which it celebrates, is by Charles Lamb.

XIII.

FEMALE POETS.

JOANNA BAILLIE*—CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

BELOVED, admired, appreciated by the best spirits of her time, it is with no little triumph that I, who plead guilty to some of that *esprit de corps* which may be translated into "pride of sex," write the name of our great female dramatist—of the first woman who won high and undisputed honours in the highest class of English poetry. The pleasure

* Since writing this paper this gifted authoress and admirable woman has passed from this world to the higher and happier state which was ever in her thoughts. A letter from her to a mutual friend, written a very few days before her death, expresses her satisfaction in having received the sacrament with her sister the Sunday previous. In this letter, for the first time during a long correspondence, she breaks off somewhat suddenly, complaining of bodily fatigue, although no one then thought her ill.

of rendering her a faint and imperfect justice is all the greater that I have the honour of claiming acquaintance with this most gifted person, and that she is in her domestic relations the very pattern of what a literary lady should be—quiet, unpretending, generous, kind, admirable in her writings, excellent in her life.

And yet of Mrs. Joanna Baillie, the praised of Scott, and of all whose praise is best worth having for half a century, what can I say, but that many an age to come will echo back their applause!

Her tragedies have a boldness and grasp of mind, a firmness of hand, and a resonance of cadence, that scarcely seem within the reach of a female writer; whilst the tenderness and sweetness of her heroines —the grace of the love-scenes—and the trembling outgushings of sensibility as in *Orra*, for instance, in the fine tragedy on Fear—would seem exclusively feminine, if we did not know that a true dramatist—as Shakespeare or Fletcher—has the wonderful power of throwing himself, mind and body, into the character that he portrays. That Mrs. Joanna *is* a true dramatist as well as a great poet, I, for one, can never doubt, although it has been the fashion to say that her plays do not act.

It must be above fifty years ago that I, then a girl of thirteen, in company with my old and dear friend, Mr. Harness, the bosom friend of Thomas Hope, the friend and correspondent of Lord Byron, (and,

be it observed, of all his correspondents, the one who seems to have impressed the daring poet with the most sincere respect), then a boy considerably younger than myself, witnessed the representation of "De Montfort," by John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Forty years after, we had the pleasure of talking over that representation with the authoress, in Lady Dacre's drawing-room, a place where poets "most do congregate," and we both agreed that the impression which the performance had made upon us remained indelible. Now, the qualities in an acted play that fixed themselves upon the minds of children so young, must have been purely dramatic. Purely dramatic, too, are many of the finer traits that strike us in reading, as, when *De Montfort*, with his ear quickened by hatred, announces the approach of *Rezenvelt*, and *Freberg* exclaims:

> "How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!
> I hear him not—"

and many others scattered through the tragedies.

I concede, however, very willingly, that Mrs. Joanna is a most charming lyrical poetess; as witness the beautiful Morning Song in the "Beacon," which breathes the very spirit of hope.

> Up! quit thy bower; late wears the hour;
> Long have the rooks cawed round thy tower;

On flower and tree loud hums the bee;
The wilding kid sports merrily:
A day so bright, so fresh, so clear,
Showeth when good fortune's near.

Up! lady fair, and braid thy hair,
And bathe thee in the breezy air;
The rolling stream that soothed thy dream
Is dancing in the sunny beam;
And hours so sweet, so bright, so gay,
Will waft good fortune on its way.

Up! time will tell; the friar's bell
Its service sound hath chimed well;
The aged crone keeps house alone,
And reapers to the fields are gone;
The active day, so fair and bright,
May bring good fortune ere the night.

There is a remarkable freedom in the diction and versification of the following beautiful song; the more remarkable that it is written for a Welsh air.

THE BLACK COCK.

Good morrow to thy sable beak,
And glossy plumage, dark and sleek,
Thy crimson moon and azure eye,
Cock of the heath so wildly shy!
I see thee slowly cowering, through
That wiry web of silver dew,
That twinkles in the morning air,
Like casement of my lady fair.

A maid there is in yonder tower,
Who, peeping from her early bower,
Half shows, like thee, with simple wile
Her braided hair and morning smile.
The rarest things, with wayward will,
Beneath the covert hide them still;
The rarest things to light of day
Look shortly forth and break away.

One fleeting moment of delight
I warmed me in her cheering sight,
And short, I ween, the time will be
That I shall parley hold with thee.
Through Snowdon's mist red beams the day;
The climbing herd-boy chaunts his lay;
The gnat-flies dance their sunny ring;
Thou art already on the wing.

This song is distinguished by the same delicious freedom, and was also written to music. Truly, the Muse can dance in fetters.

O welcome bat and owlet grey,
Thus winging low your airy way!
And welcome moth and drowsy fly,
That to mine ear come humming by!
And welcome shadows dim and deep,
And stars that through the pale sky peep;
O welcome all! to me ye say
My woodland love is on her way.

Upon the soft wind floats her hair,
Her breath is on the dewy air;

Her steps are in the whispered sound
That steals along the stilly ground.
O dawn of day, in rosy bower,
What art thou to this witching hour?
O noon of day, in sunshine bright,
What art thou to this fall of night?

I cannot resist indulging myself by transcribing the following Scottish ballad, a delightful specimen of quaint richness and quiet humour.

FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

(*An Auld Song New Buskit.*)

Fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there;
For Jock's to be married to Maggie,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

And there will be jibing and jeering,
And glancing of bonny dark een,
Loud laughing, and smooth-gabbit speering
O' questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy, the beauty,
Wha raises her cockup sae hie,
And giggles at preachings and duty,—
Guid grant that she gang na' ajee!

And there will be auld Geordie Tanner,
Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd;
She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,
But, wow! he looks dowie and cow'd.

And brown Tibbie Fowler, the heiress,
Will perk at the tap o' the ha',
Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is
To catch up her gloves when they fa',

Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleckit,
And haver and glower in her face,
While tocherless mays are negleckit,—
A crying and scandalous case.

And Maysie, wha's clavering aunty
Wad match her wi' Lowrie the laird,
And learns the young fule to be vaunty,
But neither to spin nor to caird.

And Andrew, wha's granny is yearning
To see him a clerical blade,
Was sent to the college for learning,
And cam' back a coof, as he gaed.

And there will be auld Widow Martin,
That ca's herself thirty and twa;
And thraw-gabbit Madge, wha for certain,
Was jilted by Hab o' the Shaw.

And Elspy, the sewster sae genty,
A pattern o' havins and sense,
Will straik on her mittens sae genty,
And crack wi' Mess John i' the spence.

And Angus, the seer o' fairlies,
That sits on the stane at his door,
And tells about bogles, and mair lies
Than tongue ever uttered before.

And there will be Bauldie, the boaster,
Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue;
Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,
Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young.

And Hugh, the town-writer, I'm thinking,
That trades in his lawyerly skill,
Will egg on the fighting and drinking,
To bring after grist to his mill.

And Maggie—ha! ha! will be civil,
And let the wee bridie a-bee;
A vilipend tongue is the devil,
And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then, fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there,
Frae mony a far-distant ha'ding,
The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's-head and haggis,
And browst o' the barley-mow;
E'en he that comes latest and lag is
May feast upon dainties enow.

Veal florentines in the o'en baken,
Weel plenished wi' raisins and fat.
Beef, mutton, and chuckies, a' taken
Het reeking frae spit or frae pat.

And glasses (I trow 'tis na' said ill),
To drink the young couple good luck,
Weel fill'd wi' a braw beechen ladle,
Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,
And reelin' and crossin' o' han's,
Till even auld Luckie is laughing,
As back by the aumry she stan's.

Sic bobbing, and flinging, and whirling,
While fiddlers are making their din,
And pipers are droning and skirling,
As loud as the roar of the linn.

Then, fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there,
For Jock's to be married to Maggie,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

It has always seemed to me that one of the happiest positions—let me say the very happiest position, that a woman of great talent can occupy in our high civilisation, is that of living a beloved and distinguished member of the best literary society; enjoying, listening, admiring; repaying all that she receives by a keen and willing sympathy; cultivating to perfection the social faculty; but abstaining from the wider field of authorship, even while she throws out here and there such choice and chosen bits as prove that nothing but disinclination to enter the arena debars her from winning the prize. How much better to belong to that portion of the audience which gives fame to the actor — that class of

readers to whom the writer looks for reputation—than to figure as actor or as author oneself!

Besides the infinite wisdom of resting in such a position, seated midway on the hill of fame, enjoying all the beauties of the prospect, and shielded from the storms of the summit, and the perils of the steep and rocky way, besides its security, its happiness, and its wisdom, such a choice has always appeared to me indicative of the very finest qualities, mental and moral;—feminine, modest, generous, pure. I look up to a woman, who, with powers to command the best brilliant literary success, contents herself with a warm and unenvying sympathy in the success of others, with a mixture of reverence and admiration greater than I can accord to mere genius, however high. Rare are such women beyond all rareness: but that they do exist, my friend Miss Goldsmid is a living instance; and that there was one such most eminent in the last generation, was felt by all who had the happiness and the privilege of knowing Catherine Fanshawe.

The name of this gifted woman is connected with the whole of that glorious society which formed the pride and ornament of London during the early part of the present century—the society which, after a short interregnum, succeeded the illustrious circle that had formed the great literary club in the days of Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Reynolds. Even with these names their successors may well bear a

comparison. To mention them is enough; Scott, Southey, Rogers, Moore, Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, Madame d'Arblay, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Mrs. Siddons, Sotheby, Sharpe, W. R. Spencer, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir James Mackintosh, Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, William Harness, Sydney Smith, Campbell, Canning, Thomas Hope:—there is no telling where to stop. And amongst this society, at once so dazzling and so charming, there was no name more distinguished for brilliant and various talent, or for every attractive quality, than that of Catherine Fanshawe.

Co-heiress with two other daughters of an ancient gentleman's family, the three lived together in that happy sisterly union peculiar to our country. Besides her remarkable talent for graceful and polished pleasantry, whether in prose or in verse, Miss Catherine Fanshawe was admirable as a letter-writer, as a reader of Shakespeare, and as a designer in almost every style. One of the few survivors of that brilliant society, himself a first-rate judge of art, says of her—"Her drawings and etchings are those of an artist; and so different are they in kind, that I have seen a large drawing, called 'The Genius of the Storm,' which, if I were not afraid of my own prepossessions, I should say is sublime; whilst there are groups of children by her which no one has ever surpassed for their beauty, simplicity and truth; and I have hanging up over my study fireplace a long

aqua-tinted etching of hers, called 'An After-dinner Conversation,' which is as comical as anything by Banbury, and a great deal better than anything of his, because while quite as humorous it is less caricatured."

Of course, the secret of this variety and of this excellence, lay in her power and her habit of observation. "She saw everything," says that excellent friend of hers and of mine to whom I owe the account of her drawings; she saw everything—*the whole of it*," and was only restrained from turning it into the most finished comedy by those feelings of a gentlewoman and a Christian (how nearly those words are synonymous!) which prevented her from running the risk of giving a moment's pain to any human being. I have a theory that the very highest talent commonly keeps very good company; and no better illustration of its truth could be found than this admirable person, whose Christian graces were quite on a par with her mental endowments.

Far too few of her poems have been published. Those which I subjoin, have been taken from a volume now very scarce, consisting of miscellaneous pieces, by many authors, edited by Mrs. Joanna Baillie, for the benefit of a friend. The volume was published by subscription, and is remarkable not only for these charming pieces of pleasantry, and for some of the best poems of the editor, but as containing Sir Walter Scott's most successful dramatic

effort, "Mac Duff's Cross," and Mr. Merivale's "Devon's Poly Olbion," and also for having introduced to the world Southey's whimsical and characteristic experiment upon rhyme and language, called "The Cataract of Lodore."

I plunge at once into one of the pleasantest of Miss Catherine Fanshawe's poems, "The Abrogation of the Birth-night Ball, by a Beau of the Last Century." The description of the minuet is admirable.

For ever at his lordly call
Uprose the spangled night!
Leading in gorgeous splendour bright
The minuet and the ball.
And balls each frolic hour may bring
That revels through the maddening spring,
Shaking with hurried step the painted floor,
But minuets are no more!

No more the well-taught feet shall tread
The figure of the mazy zed;
The beau of other times shall mourn
As gone, and never to return,
The graceful bow, the curtsy low,
The floating forms that undulating glide,
(Like anchor'd vessels on the swelling tide,)
That rise and sink alternate as they go,
Now bent the knee, now lifted on the toe;
The sidelong step that works its even way,
The slow pas-grave and slower balancé;
Still with fix'd gaze he eyes the imagined fair,
And turns the corner with an easy air.

Not so his partner. From her tangled train
To free her captive foot she strives in vain;
Her tangled train the struggling captive holds
(Like great Atrides) in its fatal folds;
The laws of gallantry his aid demand.
The laws of etiquette withhold his hand.
Such pains, such pleasures, now alike are o'er,
And beaus and etiquette shall soon exist no more.
At their speed behold advancing
Modern men and women dancing!
Step and dress alike express,
Above, below, from heel to toe,
Male and female awkwardness.
Without a hoop, without a ruffle,
One eternal jig and shuffle.
Where's the air, and where's the gait?
Where's the feather in the hat?
Where the frizz'd toupee? and where,
Oh! where's the powder for the hair?

* * * * *

Mark the pair whom favouring fortune
At the envied top shall place;
Humbly they the next importune
To vouchsafe a little space;

Not the graceful arm to wave in,
Or the silken robe expand;
All superfluous action saving,
Idly drops the lifeless hand.

Her downcast eye the modest beauty
Sends as doubtful of their skill,
To see if feet perform their duty,
And their endless task fulfil,

Footing, footing, footing, footing,
Footing, footing, footing still.

While the rest, in hedgerow state,
All insensible to sound,
With more than human patience wait,
Like trees fast rooted in the ground.

Not such as once, with sprightly motion,
To distant music stirr'd their stumps,
And tript from Pelion to the ocean,
Performing avenues and clumps;

What time old Jason's ship, the Argo,
Orpheus fiddling at the helm,
From Colchis bore her golden cargo,
Dancing o'er the azure realm.

But why recur to ancient story,
Or balls of modern date?
Be mine to trace the minuet's fate,
And mourn its fallen glory.

To ask who rang the passing bell?
If Vestris ran the solemn dirge to hear?
Genius of Valoüy, didst thou hover near?
Shade of Lepicq! and spirit of Gondel!

Now their angry forms arise.
Where wreaths of smoke involve the skies,
Above St. James's steeple.
I heard them curse our heavy heel,
The Irish step, the Highland reel,
And all the United People.

To the dense air the curse adhesive clung,
Repeated since by many a modish tongue
In words that may be said, but never shall be sung.*

What cause untimely urged the minuet's fate?
Did war subvert the manners of the state?
Did savage nations give the barbarous law,
The Gaul Cisalpine or the Gonoquaw?
Its fall was destined to a peaceful land,
A sportive pencil and a courtly hand.
They left a name that time itself might spare
To grinding organs, and the dancing bear.

* * * *

My next extract is a restoration. I have it myself printed in two editions of Lord Byron's works; the one English, the other American. The friend already quoted says of it,—"The letter H (I mean the Enigma so called, ascribed to Lord Byron,) she wrote at the Deepdene. I well remember her bringing it down at breakfast and reading it to us, and my impression is, that she had then just composed it."

A RIDDLE.

'Twas in heaven pronounced, and 'twas muttered in hell,
And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell;
On the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,
And the depths of the ocean its presence confess'd;
'Twill be found in the sphere when 'tis riven asunder,
Be seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder.

* "Go to the devil and shake yourself." The tune of a favourite country-dance.

'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,
Attends him at birth, and awaits him in death,
Presides o'er his happiness, honour and health,
Is the prop of his house, and the end of his wealth.
In the heaps of the miser 'tis hoarded with care,
But is sure to be lost on his prodigal heir.
It begins every hope, every wish it must bound,
With the husbandman toils, and with monarchs is crown'd.
Without it the soldier, the seaman may roam,
But woe to the wretch who expels it from home!
In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,
Nor e'en in the whirlwind of passion be drown'd.
'Twill not soften the heart; but though deaf be the ear,
It will make it acutely and instantly hear.
Yet in shade let it rest, like a delicate flower,
Ah! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour.

Now for another riddle—a charade—which my fair friends shall have the pleasure of discovering for themselves.

Inscribed on many a learned page,
In mystic characters and sage,
  Long time my *First* has stood;
And though its golden age be past,
In wooden walls it yet may last
  Till clothed with flesh and blood.

My *Second* is a glorious prize
For all who love their wondering eyes
  With curious sights to pamper;
But 'tis a sight—which should they meet,
All' improviso in the street,
  Ye gods! how they would scamper!

My *tout's* a sort of wandering throne,
To woman limited alone,
The salique law reversing;
But while the imaginary queen
Prepares to act this novel scene,
Her royal part rehearsing,
O'erturning her presumptuous plan,
Up climbs the old usurper—man,
And she jogs after as she can.

It is not often that so trifling a subject has been rendered so graceful and so pleasant as in the following pleadings of two initials, C *versus* K.

EPISTLE TO EARL HARCOURT,

On his wishing her to spell her name of Catherine with a K.

And can his antiquarian eyes
My Anglo-Saxon C despise?
And does Lord Harcourt, day by day,
Regret the extinct initial K?
And still, with ardour unabated,
Labour to get it reinstated?
I know, my lord, your generous passion
For every long-exploded fashion;
And own the Katharine you delight in
Looks irresistibly inviting,
Appears to bear the stamp and mark
Of English used in Noah's Ark;
"But all that glitters is not gold,"
Nor all things obsolete are old.
Would you but take the pains to look
In Doctor Johnson's quarto book,

(As I did, wishing much to see
The aforesaid letter's pedigree),
Believe me 'twould a tale unfold
Would make your Norman blood run cold.
My lord, you'll find the K's no better
Than an interpolated letter—
A wandering Greek, a franchised alien,
Derived from Cadmus or Deucalion,
And, why, or wherefore none can tell,
Inserted 'twixt the I and L.
The learned say our English tongue
On Gothic beams is built and hung:
Then why the solid fabric piece
With motley ornaments from Greece?
Her lettered despots had no bowels
For Northern consonants and vowels;
The Norman and the Greek grammarian
Deemed us and all our words barbarian,
Till those hard words, and harder blows
Had silenced all our haughty foes,
And proud they were to kiss the sandals
(Shoes we had none) of Goths and Vandals.

* * * *

But since our Saxon line we trace
Up to this all-subduing race,
Who from their "sole dominion" hurled
The giants of the ancient world,
Their boasted languages confounding,
And with such mortal gutturals wounding,
That Greek or Latin fell or fled,
And soon were numbered with the dead;—
Befits it us, so much their betters,
To spell our names with conquered letters?

And shall they rise and prate again,
Like Falstaff from among the slain?
A licence quite of modern date
Which no long customs consecrate;
For since this K, of doleful sound,
First set his foot on British ground,
'Tis not, as antiquaries know,
A dozen centuries ago.

That darling theme of English story,
For learning famed and martial glory,
Alfred who quelled the usurping Dane,
And burst indignant from his chain;
Who slaves redeemed to reign o'er men,
Changing the falchion for the pen,
Alfred, whom yet these realms obey.
In all his kingdom owned no K,
From foreign arms and letters free,
Preserved his Cyngly dignity,
And wrote it with a Saxon C.

* * * *

But grant this specious plea prevailing.
And all my legal learning failing,
There yet remains so black a charge,
Not only 'gainst the Ks at large,
But the individual K in question,
You'd tremble at the bare suggestion,
Nor ever more a wish reveal
So adverse to the public weal.

Dear gentle Earl, you little know
That wish might work a world of woe;
The ears that are unborn would rise
In judgment 'gainst your lordship's eyes;

The ears that are unborn would rue
Your letter patent to renew
The dormant dignity of *shrew*.
The K restored takes off the attainder,
And grants the title, with remainder
In perpetuity devised
To Katharines lawfully baptised.
What has not Shakespeare said and sung
Of our pre-eminence of tongue!
His glowing pen has writ the name
In characters of fire and flame;
Not flames, that mingle as they rise
Innocuous with their kindred skies;
Some chemic lady-like solution,
Shown at the Royal Institution;
But such as still, with ceaseless clamour,
Dance round the anvil and the hammer.
See him the comic muse invoking
(The merry nymph with laughter choking)
While he exhibits at her shrine
The unhallowed form of Katharine;
And there the Gorgon image plants,—
Palladium of the termagants.
He formed it of the rudest ore
That lay in his exhaustless store,
Nor from the crackling furnace drew,
Which still the breath of genius blew,
Till (to preserve the bright allusion)
The mass was in a state of fusion.
Then cast it in a Grecian mould,
Once modelled from a living scold;
When from her shelly prison burst
That finished vixen, Kate the curst

If practice e'er with precept tallies
Could Shakespeare set down aught in malice?
From Nature all his forms he drew,
And held the mirror to her view;
And if an ugly wart arose,
Or freckle upon Nature's nose,
He flattered not the unsightly flaw,
But marked and copied what he saw;
Strictly fulfilling all his duties
Alike to blemishes and beauties:
So that in Shakespeare's time 'tis plain
The Katharines were scolds in grain,
No females louder, fiercer, worse.
Now contemplate the bright reverse;
And say amid the countless names
Borne by contemporary dames,—
Exotics, fetched from different nations,
Or good old English appellations,—
Names hunted out from ancient books,
Or found 'mid dairy-maids and cooks,
Genteel, familiar or pedantic,
Grecian, Roman or romantic,
Christian, Infidel or Jew,
Heroines, fabulous or true,
Ruths, Rebeccas, Rachels, Sarahs,
Charlottes, Harriets, Emmas, Claras,
Auroras, Helens, Daphnes, Delias,
Martias, Portias and Cornelias,
Nannys, Fannys, Jennys, Hettys,
Dollys, Mollys, Biddys, Bettys,
Sacharissas, Melusinas,
Dulcibellas, Celestinas,—
Say is there one more free from blame,
One that enjoys a fair fame,

One more endowed with Christian graces,
(Although I say it to our faces,
And flattery we don't delight in),
Than Catherine at this present writing?
Where then can all the difference be?
Where but between the K and C?
Between the graceful curving line
We now prefix to atherine.
Which seems to keep in mild police,
Those rebel syllables in peace,
Describing in the line of duty
Both physical and moral beauty.
And that impracticable K,
Who led them all so much astray?
Was never seen in black and white
A character more full of spite!
That stubborn back, to bend unskilful,
So perpendicularly wilful!
With angles hideous to behold
Like the sharp elbows of a scold,
In attitude, when words shall fail
To fight their battles tooth and nail.

In page the first you're sagely told
That "all that glitters is not gold;"
Fain would I quote one proverb more,—
"N'éveillez pas le chat qui dort."
Here some will smile as if suspicious
The simile was injudicious.
Because in C A T they trace
Alliance with the feline race.
But we the name alone inherit,
C has the latter, K the spirit;

And woe betide the man who tries,
Whether or no the spirit dies!
Though dormant long, it yet survives
With its full complement of lives;
The nature of the beast is still
To scratch and claw if not to kill;
For royal cats to low-born wrangling
Will superadd the gift of strangling.
Witness in modern times the fate
Of that unhappy potentate,
Who from his palace near the Pole
Where the chill waves of Neva roll,
Was snatched, while yet alive and merry,
And sent on board old Charon's ferry,
The Styx he traversed execrating
A Katharine of his own creating.

* * * * *

In evil hour this simple Czar,
Impelled by some malignant star
Bestowed upon his new Czarina,
The fatal name of Katerina;
And as Monseigneur l'Archevêque
Chose to baptize her à la Grecque,
'Twas Katerina with a K:
He rued it to his dying day.
Nay died, as I observed before,
The sooner on that very score.
The Princess quickly learnt her cue,
Improved upon the part of shrew,
And as the plot began to thicken,
She wrung his head off like a chicken;
In short this despot of a wife
Robbed the poor man of crown and life;

And robbing Peter paid not Paul,
But cleared the stage of great and small.

* * * * *

Besides these genial pleasantries, many shorter poems on local and temporary subjects enlivened the brilliant circle of which Miss Catharine Fanshawe formed so precious an ornament. Many have perished as occasional verses will perish, however happy. I insert one specimen to show how her lively fancy could embellish the merest trifle.

When the Regent's Park was first laid out she parodied the two well-known lines from Pope's "Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady:"

"Here shall the spring its earliest sweets bestow,
Here the first roses of the year shall blow,"

and by only altering one word of the first line, and a single letter of the second, changed their entire meaning, and rendered them applicable to the new resort of the Londoners:

"Here shall the spring its earliest *coughs* bestow,
Here the first *n*oses of the year shall blow."

One wonders what Pope would have thought of such a parody. It is really a great honour. But would he have thought so?

XIV.

MARRIED POETS.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING—ROBERT BROWNING.

MARRIED poets! Charming words are these, significant of congenial gifts, congenial labour, congenial tastes;—quick and sweet resources of mind and of heart, a long future of happiness live in those two words. And the reality is as rare as it is charming. Married authors we have had of all ages and of all countries; from the Daciers, standing stiff and stately under their learning, as if it were a load, down to the Guizots, whose story is so pretty, that it would sound like a romance to all who did not know how often romance looks pale beside reality; from the ducal pair of Newcastle, walking stately and stiff under their strawberry-leafed coronets, to William and Mary Howitt, ornaments of a sect to whom coronets are an abomination. Married authors have been plentiful as

blackberries, but married poets have been rare indeed! The last instance, too, was rather a warning than an example. When Caroline Bowles changed her own loved and honoured name to become the wife of the great and good man Robert Southey, all seemed to promise fairly, but a slow and fatal disease had seized him even before the wedding-day, and darkened around him to the hour of his death. In the pair of whom I am now to speak, the very reverse of this sad destiny has happily befallen, and the health of the bride, which seemed gone for ever, has revived under the influence of the climate of Italy, of new scenes, of new duties, a new and untried felicity.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is too dear to me as a friend to be spoken of merely as a poetess. Indeed such is the influence of her manners, her conversation, her temper, her thousand sweet and attaching qualities, that they who know her best are apt to lose sight altogether of her learning and of her genius, and to think of her only as the most charming person that they have ever met. But she is known to so few, and the peculiar characteristics of her writings, their purity, their tenderness, their piety, and their intense feeling of humanity and of womanhood have won for her the love of so many, that it will gratify them without, I trust, infringing on the sacredness of private intercourse to speak of her not wholly as a poetess, but a little as a woman.

When in listening to the nightingale, we try to catch a glimpse of the shy songster, we are moved by a deeper feeling than curiosity.

My first acquaintance with Elizabeth Barrett commenced about fifteen years ago. She was certainly one of the most interesting persons that I had ever seen. Everybody who then saw her said the same; so that it is not merely the impression of my partiality, or my enthusiasm. Of a slight, delicate figure, with a shower of dark curls falling on either side of a most expressive face, large tender eyes richly fringed by dark eyelashes, a smile like a sunbeam, and such a look of youthfulness, that I had some difficulty in persuading a friend, in whose carriage we went together to Chiswick, that the translatress of the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, the authoress of the "Essay on Mind," was old enough to be introduced into company, in technical language was *out*. Through the kindness of another invaluable friend, to whom I owe many obligations, but none so great as this, I saw much of her during my stay in town. We met so constantly and so familiarly, that in spite of the difference of age intimacy ripened into friendship, and after my return into the country, we corresponded freely and frequently, her letters being just what letters ought to be—her own talk put upon paper.

The next year was a painful one to herself and to all who loved her. She broke a blood-vessel upon the lungs which did not heal. If there had been con-

sumption in the family that disease would have intervened. There were no seeds of the fatal English malady in her constitution, and she escaped. Still, however, the vessel did not heal, and after attending her for above a twelvemonth at her father's house in Wimpole Street, Dr. Chambers, on the approach of winter, ordered her to a milder climate. Her eldest brother, a brother in heart and in talent worthy of such a sister, together with other devoted relatives accompanied her to Torquay, and *there* occurred the fatal event which saddened her bloom of youth, and gave a deeper hue of thought and feeling, especially of devotional feeling, to her poetry. I have so often been asked what could be the shadow that had passed over that young heart, that now that time has softened the first agony it seems to me right that the world should hear the story of an accident in which there was much sorrow, but no blame.

Nearly a twelvemonth had passed, and the invalid, still attended by her affectionate companions, had derived much benefit from the mild sea-breezes of Devonshire. One fine summer morning her favourite brother, together with two other fine young men, his friends, embarked on board a small sailing-vessel for a trip of a few hours. Excellent sailors all, and familiar with the coast, they sent back the boatmen, and undertook themselves the management of the little craft. Danger was not

dreamt of by any one; after the catastrophe no one could divine the cause, but in a few minutes after their embarkation, and in sight of their very windows, just as they were crossing the bar, the boat went down, and all who were in her perished. Even the bodies were never found. I was told by a party who were travelling that year in Devonshire and Cornwall, that it was most affecting to see on the corner houses of every village street, on every church-door and almost on every cliff for miles and miles along the coast handbills, offering large rewards for linen cast ashore marked with the initials of the beloved dead; for it so chanced that all the three were of the dearest and the best; one, I believe, an only son, the other the son of a widow.

This tragedy nearly killed Elizabeth Barrett. She was utterly prostrated by the horror and the grief, and by a natural but a most unjust feeling that she had been in some sort the cause of this great misery. It was not until the following year that she could be removed in an invalid carriage, and by journeys of twenty miles a day, to her afflicted family and her London home. The house that she occupied at Torquay had been chosen as one of the most sheltered in the place. It stood at the bottom of the cliffs almost close to the sea; and she told me herself that during that whole winter the sound of the waves rang in her ears like the moans of one dying. Still she clung to literature and to Greek;

in all probability she would have died without that wholesome diversion to her thoughts. Her medical attendant did not always understand this. To prevent the remonstrances of her friendly physician, Dr. Barry, she caused a small edition of Plato to be so bound as to resemble a novel. He did not know, skilful and kind though he were, that to her such books were not an arduous and painful study, but a consolation and a delight.

Returned to London, she began the life which she continued for so many years, confined to one large and commodious but darkened chamber, admitting only her own affectionate family and a few devoted friends (I, myself, have often joyfully travelled five-and-forty miles to see her, and returned the same evening without entering another house); reading almost every book worth reading in almost every language, and giving herself heart and soul to that poetry of which she seemed born to be the priestess.

Gradually her health improved. About four years ago she married Mr. Browning, and immediately accompanied him to Pisa. They then settled at Florence; and this summer I have had the exquisite pleasure of seeing her once more in London with a lovely boy at her knee, almost as well as ever, and telling tales of Italian rambles, of losing herself in chestnut forests, and scrambling on mule-back up the sources of extinct volcanoes. May

Heaven continue to her such health and such happiness!

In her abundant riches it is difficult to select extracts. If I did not know her scorn of her own earlier works (for she was the most precocious of authoresses, wrote largely at ten years old, and more than well at fifteen)—if I were not aware of her fastidiousness, I should be tempted to rescue certain exquisite stanzas which I find printed at the end of her first version of the "Prometheus Bound"—for, dissatisfied with her girlish translation of the grand old Greek, she recommenced her labour and went fairly through the drama from the first line to the last; but she has condemned the poem, and therefore I refrain.

Perhaps there is some personal preference in the selection I do make, since I first received it written in her own clear and beautiful manuscript on the fly-leaf of another volume, which she has also withdrawn from circulation. Besides being one of the earliest, it is amongst the most characteristic of her smaller poems.

THE SEAMEW.

How joyously the young seamew
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,
Whereon our little bark had thrown
A forward shade, the only one,
(But shadows aye will men pursue.)

Familiar with the waves, and free
As if their own white foam were he;
His heart upon the heart of ocean
Lay learning all its mystic motion
And throbbing to the throbbing sea.

And such a brightness in his eye,
As if the ocean and the sky
Within him had lit up and nurst
A soul God gave him not at first
To comprehend their mystery.

We were not cruel, yet did sunder
His white wing from the blue waves under,
And bound it;—while his fearless eyes
Looked up to ours in calm surprise,
As deeming us some ocean wonder.

We bore our ocean bird unto
A grassy place where he might view
The flowers that curtsy to the bees,
The waving of the tall green trees,
The falling of the silver dew.

The flowers of earth were pale to him
Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim;
And when earth's dew around him lay
He thought of ocean's wingéd spray
And his eye waxéd pale and dim.

The green trees round him only made
A prison, with their darksome shade:
And drooped his wing and mournéd he
For his own boundless glittering sea,—
Albeit he knew not they could fade.

Then One her gladsome face did bring,
Her gentle voice's murmuring,
In ocean's stead his heart to move,
And teach him what was human love—
He thought it a strange mournful thing.

He lay down in his grief to die,
(First looking to the sea-like sky
That hath no waves,) because, alas!
Our human touch did on him pass,
And with our touch, our agony.

Perhaps the very finest of Mrs. Browning's poems is "The Lady Geraldine's Courtship," written (to meet the double exigency of completing the uniformity of the original two volumes, and of catching the vessel that was to carry the proofs to America) in the incredible space of twelve hours. That delicious ballad must have been lying unborn in her head and in her heart; but when we think of its length and of its beauty, the shortness of time in which it was put into form appears one of the most stupendous efforts of the human mind. And the writer was a delicate woman, a confirmed invalid, just dressed and supported for two or three hours from her bed to her sofa, and so back again. Let me add, too, that the exertion might have been avoided by a new arrangement of the smaller poems, if Miss Barrett would only have consented to place "Pan is Dead" at the end of the first volume instead of the second. The dif-

ference does not seem much. But she had promised Mr. Kenyon that "Pan is Dead" should conclude the collection; and Mr. Kenyon was out of town an dcould not release her word. To this delicate conscientiousness we owe one of the most charming love-stories in any language. It is too long for insertion here; and I no more dare venture an abridgment, than I should venture to break one of the crown jewels. So the Dead Pan shall take the place. It were mere pedantry to compare Schiller's "Gods of Greece" to this glorious gallery of classical statues, fresh and life-like, as if just struck into beauty by the chisel of Phidias.

I transcribe Mrs. Browning's own modest and graceful introduction.

THE DEAD PAN.

Excited by Schiller's 'Götter Griechenlands,' and partly founded on a well-known tradition mentioned in a treatise of Plutarch ("De Oraculorum Defectu,") according to which, at the hour of the Saviour's agony, a cry of "Great Pan is Dead!" swept across the waves in the hearing of certain mariners, and the oracles ceased.

"It is in all veneration to the memory of the deathless Schiller that I oppose a doctrine still more dishonouring to poetry than to Christianity.

"As Mr. Kenyon's graceful and harmonious

paraphrase of the German poem was the first occasion of my turning my thoughts in this direction, I take advantage of the pretence to indulge my feelings (which overflow on other grounds), by inscribing my lyric to that dear friend and relative, with the earnestness of appreciating esteem as well as of affectionate gratitude.—E. B. B."

Gods of Hellas! gods of Hellas!
Can ye listen in your silence?
Can your mystic voices tell us
Where ye hide? In floating islands
With a wind that evermore
Keeps you out of sight of shore?
Pan, Pan is dead.

In what revels are ye sunken
In old Æthiopia?
Have the Pygmies made you drunken,
Bathing in Mandragora
Your divine pale lips, that shiver
Like the lilies in the river?
Pan, Pan is dead.

Do ye sit there still in slumber,
In gigantic Alpine rows?
The black poppies out of number,
Nodding, dripping from your brows
To the red lees of your wine,
And so kept alive and fine?
Pan, Pan is dead.

Or lie crushed your stagnant corses
Where the silver spheres roll on,
Stung to life by centric forces,
Thrown like rays out from the sun?
While the smoke of your old altars
Is the shroud that round you welters?
Great Pan is dead.

"Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas!"
Said the old Hellenic tongue,
Said the hero-oaths, as well as
Poets' songs the sweetest sung!
Have ye grown deaf in a day?
Can ye speak not yea or nay—
Since Pan is dead?

Do ye leave your rivers flowing
All alone, O Naiades!
While your drenchèd locks dry slow in
This cold feeble sun and breeze?
Not a word the Naiads say
Though the rivers run for aye,—
For Pan is dead.

From the glooming of the oak-wood,
O, ye Dryads, could ye flee?
At the rushing thunder-stroke, would
No sob tremble through the tree?
Not a word the Dryads say,
Though the forests wave for aye.
For Pan is dead.

Have ye left the mountain places,
Oreads wild for other tryst?
Shall we see no sudden faces
Strike a glory through the mist?
Not a sound the silence thrills
Of the everlasting hills.
Pan, Pan is dead.

O, twelve gods of Plato's vision
Crowned to starry wanderings,—
With your chariots in procession
And your silver clash of wings.
Very pale ye seem to rise,
Ghosts of Grecian deities,
Now Pan is dead.

Jove! that right hand is unloaded,
Whence the thunder did prevail:
While in idiotcy of godhead
Thou art staring, the stars pale!
And thine eagle blind and old
Roughs his feathers in the cold.
Pan, Pan is dead.

Where, O Juno! is the glory
Of thy regal look and tread?
Will they lay for evermore, thee
On thy dim straight golden bed?
Will thy queendom all lie hid
Meekly under either lid?
Pan, Pan is dead

Ha, Apollo! Floats his golden
Hair, all mist-like where he stands;
While the Muses hang enfolding
Knee and foot with faint wild hands.
'Neath the clanging of thy bow
Niobe looked lost as thou!
Pan, Pan is dead.

Shall the casque with its brown iron
Pallas' broad blue eyes eclipse,
And no hero take inspiring
From the God-greek of her lips?
'Neath her olive dost thou sit,
Mars the mighty, cursing it?
Pan, Pan is dead.

Bacchus, Bacchus! on the Panther
He swoons, bound with his own vines!
And his Mænads slowly saunter,
Head aside among the pines.
While they murmur dreamingly,
Evohe—ah—evohe!
Ah, Pan is dead.

Neptune lies beside his trident,
Dull and senseless as a stone:
And old Pluto, deaf and silent,
Is cast out into the sun.
Ceres smileth stern thereat,
"We *all* now are desolate"—
Now Pan is dead.

Aphrodite! dead and driven
As thy native foam thou art;
With the cestus long done heaving
On the white calm of thine heart!
Ai Adonis! At that shriek
Not a tear runs down her cheek—
Pan, Pan is dead.

And the loves we used to know from
One another—huddled lie
Frore as taken in a snow-storm
Close beside her tenderly,—
As if each had weakly tried
Once to kiss her ere he died.
Pan, Pan is dead.

What, and Hermes? Time entralleth
All thy cunning, Hermes, thus,—
And the ivy blindly crawleth
Round thy brave caduceus?
Hast thou no new message for us
Full of thunder and Jove glories?
Nay! Pan is dead.

Crownèd Cybele's great turret
Rocks and crumbles on her head:
Roar the lions of her chariot
Toward the wilderness unfed:
Scornful children are not mute,—
"Mother, mother, walk afoot,—
Since Pan is dead."

In the fiery-hearted centre
Of the solemn Universe,
Ancient Vesta,—who could enter
To consume thee with his curse?
Drop thy grey chin on thy knee,
O, thou palsied Mystery!
For Pan is dead.

Gods! we vainly do adjure you,—
Ye return nor words nor sign:
Not a votary could secure you
Even a grave for your Divine!
Not a grave to show thereby
Here those grey old gods do lie.
And Pan is dead.

Even that Greece who took your wages
Calls the Obolus outworn,
And the hoarse deep-throated ages
Laugh your godships unto scorn—
And the poets do disclaim you
Or grow colder if they name you—
And Pan is dead.

Gods bereavèd, gods belated,—
With your purples rent asunder!
Gods discrowned and desecrated,—
Disinherited of thunder!
Now the goats may climb and crop
The soft grass on Ida's top—
Now Pan is dead.

Calm of old, the bark went onward
When a cry more loud than wind
Rose up, deepened, and swept sunward,
From the pilèd Dark behind:
And the sun shrank and grew pale
Breathed against by the great wail—
"Pan, Pan is dead."

And the rowers from the benches
Fell, each shuddering on his face—
While departing Influences
Struck a cold back through the place:
And the shadow of the ship
Reeled along the passive deep—
Pan, Pan is dead.

I have no room for the rest, but I must find a place for one exquisite stanza:

O, ye vain false gods of Hellas,
Ye are silent evermore!
And I dash down this old chalice
Whence libations ran of yore.
See! the wine crawls in the dust
Worm-like—as your glories must!
Since Pan is dead.

The last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems closes with three-and-forty sonnets *from the Portuguese*—glowing with passion, melting with tenderness. True love was never more fitly sung:

What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver! . . . who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal
In unexpected largesse? Am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts I render nothing back at all?
Not so. Not cold!—but very poor instead!
Ask God, who knows! for frequent tears have run
The colours from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! Let it serve to trample on.

There is a deep truth in this which follows:

Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright
Let temple burn or flax! An equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar plant or weed.
And love is fire: and when I say at need,
I love thee—mark!—*I love thee!* in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I *feel*, across the inferior features,
Of what I *am* doth flash itself, and show
How that great *work of love* enhances Nature's.

The same visit to London that brought me acquainted with my beloved friend, Elizabeth Barrett,

first gave me a sight of Mr. Browning. It was at a period that forms an epoch in the annals of the modern drama—the first representation of "Ion."

I had the honour and pleasure of being the inmate of Mr. and Mrs. Sergeant Talfourd (my accomplished friend has since worthily changed his professional title—but his higher title of poet is indelible)—having been, I believe, amongst the first who had seen that fine play in manuscript. The dinner party consisted merely of Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Landor, and I think Mr. Forster. By a singular coincidence it was our host's birthday, and no one present can forget the triumph of the evening—a triumph of no common order as regarded the number, the quality, or the enthusiasm of the audience; the boxes being crammed to the ceiling, and the pit filled as in an elder day with critics and gentlemen.

A large party followed the poet home to supper, a party comprising distinguished persons of almost every class; lawyers, authors, actors, artists, all were mingled around that splendid board; healths were drunk and speeches spoken, and it fell to the lot of the young author of "Paracelsus" to respond to the toast of "The Poets of England." That he performed this task with grace and modesty, and that he looked still younger than he was, I well remember; but we were not introduced and I knew him only by those successive works which redeemed

the pledge that "Paracelsus" had given, until this very summer, when going to London purposely to meet my beloved friend, I was by her presented to her husband. Ah! I hope it will not be fifteen years before we look each other in the face again!

I never see those two volumes of his collected works which correspond so prettily with the last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems—a sort of literary twins—without wishing again and again, and again, that we had actors and a stage. Besides "The Blot on the Scutcheon" which has been successfully produced at two metropolitan theatres, "Colombe's Birthday" and "Lucia" show not only what he has done, but what with the hope of a great triumph before him he might yet do as a dramatist. I could show what I mean by transcribing the last act of "Colombe's Birthday." I could make my meaning clearer still by transcribing the whole play. But as these huge borrowings are out of the question, I must limit myself to a couple of dramatic lyrics each of which tells its own story:

MY LAST DUCHESS.—FERRARA.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall
Looking as if she were alive; I call
That piece a wonder now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read

Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you but I),
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst
How such a glance came there; so not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat;" such stuff
Was courtesy she thought; and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impress; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! my favour at her breast
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush at least. She thanked men—good; but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred years old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say: "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me;—here you miss
Or there exceed the mark;" and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set

Her wits to yours forsooth and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping, and I chuse
Never to stoop. Oh, Sir, she smiled no doubt
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands,
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you to rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune though
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

Poor dead Duchess! and poor living one too! for that complaisant Ambassador who listened so silently would hardly give warning, even if the father were likely to take it; and we feel as they walk down the Palace stairs that another victim comes.

The pathos of the next lyric is of a different order

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

[16—.]

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew,
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other: we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride never changing our place,
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting, but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mechelm church-steeple we heard the half chime,
So Ioris broke silence with "Yet there is time!"

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lip shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Ioris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Ioris and I,
Past Loos and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittlé bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Ioris, "for Aix is in sight!

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news, which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,
As I sate with his head twixt my knees on the ground,
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat one last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

Although we have cause to hope that the good steed recovered, yet his trial of speed and strength is too painful to conclude with. I add a few lines from the "Englishman in Italy," a long poem so

pulpy, so juicy, so full of bright colour and of rich detail, that it is just like a picture by Rubens. Selection is difficult—but I choose the passage in question because its exceeding truth was first pointed out to me by Mr. Ruskin.

But to-day not a boat reached Salerno,
So back to a man
Came our friends with whose help in the vineyards
Grape-harvest began:
In the vat half-way up on our house-side
Like blood the juice spins,
While your brother all bare-legged is dancing
Till breathless he grins
Dead beaten in effort on effort
To keep the grapes under,
Since still when he seems all but master
In pours the fresh plunder
From girls who keep coming and going
With basket on shoulder—

* * * * *

Meanwhile see the grape-bunch they've brought you,—
The rain-water slips
O'er the heavy blue bloom on each globe,
Which the wasp to your lips
Still follows with fretful persistence—
Nay taste while awake
This half of a curd-white smooth cheese-ball,
That peels flake by flake
Like an onion's each smoother and whiter;
Next sip this weak wine

From the thin green glass flask with its stopper
A leaf of the vine—
And end with the prickly pear's red flesh,
That leaves through its juice
The stony black seeds on your pearl teeth—

and so on.

XV.

PROSE PASTORALS.

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S ARCADIA — ISAAC WALTON'S COMPLETE ANGLER.

DURING this warm summer, and above all during this dry burning harvest weather, which makes my poor little roadside cottage (the cottage which for that reason amongst others I am about to leave) so insupportable from glare, and heat, and dust in the fine season, I have the frequent, almost daily habit of sallying forth into the charming green lane, the grassy, turfy, shady lane of which I have before made mention, and of which I share the use and the enjoyment with the gipsies. Last summer I was able to walk thither, but in the winter I was visited by rheumatism and cannot walk so far without much heat and fatigue; so my old pony-phaeton conveys me and my little maid, and my pet-dog Fanchon, and my little maid's needle-work of flounces and fineries, and my books and writing-case, as far

as the road leads, and sometimes a little farther; and we proceed to a certain green hillock under down-hanging elms, close shut in between a bend in the lane on our own side, and an amphitheatre of oak and ash and beech trees opposite; where we have partly found and partly scooped out for ourselves a turfy seat and turfy table redolent of wild-thyme and a thousand fairy flowers, delicious in its coolness, its fragrance, and its repose.

Behind the thick hedge on the one hand stretch fresh water-meadows, where the clear brook wanders in strange meanders between clumps of alder-bushes and willow-pollards; fringed by the blue forget-me-not, the yellow loosestrife, the purple willow-herb, and the creamy tufts of the queen of the meadow; on the other hand we catch a glimpse over gates of large tracts of arable land, wheat, oat, clover, and bean fields, sloping upward to the sun; and hear, not too closely, the creaking waggon and the sharpening scythe, the whistle, the halloo, and the laugh, all that forms the pleasant sound of harvest labour. Just beyond the bend in the lane too, are two fires, belonging to two distinct encampments of gipsies; and the children, dogs, and donkeys of these wandering tribes are nearly the only living things that come into sight, exciting Fanchon now to pretty defiance, now to prettier fear.

This is my constant resort on summer afternoons; and there I have the habit of remaining engaged

either with my book or with my pen until the decline of the sun gives token that we may gather up our several properties, and that aided by my staff I may take a turn or two in the smoothest part of the lane and proceed to meet the pony-chaise at a gate leading to the old Manor House which forms the usual termination of my walk.

Now this staff, one of the oldest friends I have in the world, is pretty nearly as well known as myself in our Berkshire village.

Sixty years ago it was a stick of quality and belonged to a certain Duchess Dowager of Atholl, that Duchess of Atholl who was in her own right Baroness Strange and Lady of Mann, with whom we had some acquaintance because her youngest son married a first cousin of my father's and took the name of Aynsley as his wife had done before him, as a condition of inheriting an estate in Northumberland. I have a dim recollection of the Duchess, much such an one as Dr. Johnson had of Queen Anne, as "a stately lady in black silk." Well! in her time the stick was a stick of distinction, but on her leaving her Berkshire house it was left behind and huddled by an auctioneer into a lot of old umbrellas, watering-pots, and flower-stands which my father bought for a song. I believe that he made the purchase chiefly for the sake of this stick, which he presented to my mother's faithful and favourite old housekeeper, Mrs. Mosse, who lived in

our family sixty years and was sufficiently lame to find such a support of great use and comfort in her short and unfrequent walks. During her time and for her sake, I first contracted a familiar and friendly acquaintanceship with this ancient piece of garniture. It was indeed a stick of some pretension, of the order commonly called a crook, such as may be seen upon a chimney-piece figuring in the hand of some trim shepherdess of Dresden china. What the wood might have been I cannot tell: light, straight, slender, strong it certainly was, polished and veined, and as I first remember it yellowish in colour, although it became darker as it advanced in age. It was amongst the tallest of its order; nearly five feet high, and headed with a crook of ivory, bound to the wood by a broad silver rim—as ladylike a stick as could be seen on a summer's day. The only one of the sort I ever met with had belonged to the great-grandmother of a friend of mine, and was handed down as a family relique; that crook probably of the same age as our's was more ornate and elaborate, it had a curious carved handle, not unlike the hilt of a sword, decorated with a leather tassel, so to say a stick-knot.

Well, poor Mossy died; and the stick precious upon her account became doubly so when my own dear mother took to using it during her latter days, and when she also followed her old servant to a happier world. And then everybody knows how the

merest trifles which have formed part of the daily life of the loved and lost, especially those things which they have touched, are cherished and cared for and put aside; how we dare not look upon them for very love; and how by some accident that nobody can explain they come to light in the course of time, and after a momentary increase of sadness help to familiarise and render pleasant the memory by which they are endeared. It is a natural and right process, like the springing of a flower upon a grave. So the stick re-appeared in the hall, and from some whim which I have never rightly understood myself, I who had no more need of such a supporter than the youngest woman in the parish, who was indeed the best walker of my years for a dozen miles round, and piqued myself not a little upon so being, took a fancy to use this stick in my own proper person, and most pertinaciously carried this fancy into execution. Much was I laughed at for this crotchet, and I laughed too. Friends questioned, strangers stared; but impassive to stare or to question I remained constant to my supporter. Except when I went to London (for I paid so much homage to public opinion as to avoid such a display *there*) I should as soon have thought of walking out without my bonnet as without my stick. That stick was my inseparable companion.

To be sure we met with a few misadventures in our companionship. Once I left my prop behind

me in a marquee at a cricket match, and it had well-nigh been tossed away amongst the tent-poles; once it was stuck against a bush in a copse where I happened to be nutting, and got well thrashed (according to the notable example of Sancho with the galley-slaves), in company with its brethren the hazel-rods; once it was lost in a fair (I am not sure that it was not cried upon that occasion); often forgotten in halls and vestibules; and once fairly stolen by a mischievous schoolboy from a friend's portico.

This last calamity cost me a ten-mile walk, undertaken with an alacrity which proved how little I really needed my trusty supporter. Before I had discovered my loss—for that same prop of mine had passed many a summer night leaning against the pillars of that portico—before I had even dreamt of the mishap, the papa and mamma of the delinquent chancing to have old-fashioned notions of good breeding, sent a servant with a magnificent note in the third person, setting forth in the choicest terms their regret and displeasure, deprecating my anger, and entreating me to fix the day and the hour on which they and the culprit might be permitted to wait upon me to renew their excuses in person. Such a note! In diction, in caligraphy, in folding, it would have done honour to "The Polite Letter-writter:" the paper stamped with an oak-wreath and breathing of ottar of roses, and the seal

as big as that bearing her Majesty's arms from a public office, were real works of art. I could as soon have answered such a letter, or have sate in state to receive the threatened apology, as I could have taken a journey in the air upon a broomstick. Greatly preferring the offence to the reparation, I had nothing for it but to forestall the visit, shake hands with the poor boy, who turned out a fine spirited lad, and try, by laughing over the matter with his parents, to bring about a general pacification, in which attempt, they being less formidable in person than on paper, I happily succeeded.

Manifold have been our escapes. One was from an adventure natural to the stick-genus—a battle.

Walking past a farm-house by the side of a fair neighbour with no other companions than our dogs; —hers a beautiful King Charles, mine a no less beautiful and far rarer spaniel of the old brown cocking breed, Flush, the father of Fanchon;—our poor pets were set upon by a furious yard-dog unluckily let loose, a tremendous mastiff, dangerous to man and beast. The King Charles fled to his mistress, who instantly caught him up. Flush stood his ground, and would, I verily believe, have been killed but for me and my weapon. We did battle valiantly, and contrived to stand our ground until in a space of time which seemed very long, and was, I suppose very short, the din brought forth the farmer, who, in the midst of a storm of scream-

ing, scolding, growling, and barking, choked off his brute, and left my friend and me, the danger being over, so frightened that we could hardly get home. Although she had naturally consulted the safety of her own pet first, she had done her duty womanfully, so far as screaming went. That was the first fight I ever was in in my life, and I hope it will be the last.

Another misfortune, so to say personal, which befel my staff was the loss of its own head—the ivory crook, which came off in the act of pulling down a rich branch of woodbine from the top of a hedge. A deep muddy ditch received the poor crook, which sank instantly, and in spite of efforts many and various could never be recovered. The worst part of this mutilation was, as often happens to living patients, the cure. Being sent to a parasol-shop to have a new crook put on, the stupid people first docked many inches of its height, and then stuck on so clumsily a heavy bone umbrella-top, that it fell off in a few days of its own accord without any accident at all. And the poor stick might have remained for ever headless and "curtailed of his fair proportion," but that a friend of mine (one of those persons who knows how to do kind things in little as well as in great) happened to remember that she had an ebony top that would just fit it; and her husband, with equal kindness, completed the good action by fastening on the

shining black knob so adroitly, that, although it has been now four or five years in wear, it remains as firm as the first day, looking only a little graver, and more fit for the poor old mistress, who having at first taken to a staff in sport, is now so lame as to be unable to walk without one.

And since the black head has supplanted the white one, another association has come to endear this friend of sixty years. A little boy, called Henry, the child of the house (son by the way to the hemmer of flounces) has ever since he has been four years old watched my ways, and ministered unbidden to my wants and fancies. Long before he could open the outer door, before indeed he was half the height of the wand in question, there he would stand, the stick in one hand, and if it were summer time a flower in the other, waiting for my going out, the pretty Saxon boy with his upright figure, his golden hair, his eyes like two stars, and his bright intelligent smile! We were so used to see him there, silent and graceful as a Queen's page, that when he returned to school after the holidays, and somebody else presented the stick and the rose, I hardly cared to take them. It seemed as if something was wrong, I missed him so. Most punctual of petted children! What would Henry have said to-day?

I might have observed, if I had only seen what passed before my eyes, that something was amiss in

our small household; that Sarah answered the bell, and that the hemmer of flounces, when she did appear, seemed flurried and fatigued. But I was thinking of Sir Philip Sydney, of the "Defence of Poetry," of the "Arcadia," and of my own resolution to proceed to the green lane, and to dissect that famous pastoral, and select from the mass, which even to myself I hardly confessed to be ponderous, such pages as might suit an age that by no means partakes of my taste for folios. So I said to her, "That the afternoon being cool, and I less lame than usual, I thought we should not need Sam and the pony-chaise, but that I could manage by the help of my stick."

At that word out burst the terrible tidings. My stick, my poor old stick, my life-long friend, the faithful companion of so many walks, was missing, was gone, was lost! Last night, on our return from the lane, the place in the pony-chaise where Sam and I had carefully deposited it was found vacant. Sam himself, that model of careful drivers and faithful servants, had run back the moment he had unharnessed the pony, had retraced every step of the road, beating the ground like a pointer, questioning everybody, offering rewards, visiting ale-house and beer-house (places that, without special cause, Sam never does visit), to make proclamation of the loss, and finishing all by getting up at four o'clock in the morning, and beating the beaten ground over

again. She herself, who so seldom stirs without me, and so seldom lets me stir without her, that she may pass for my shadow, or (without offence be it spoken) for a sort of walking-stick herself, she had sallied forth, visiting lane and field, road and meadow, questioning reaper and gipsy, a sort of living hue and cry.

"And really, Ma'am," quoth she, "there is some comfort in the interest the people take in the stick! If it were anything alive, the pony or Fanchon or little Henry, or we ourselves, they could not be more sorry. Master Brent, Ma'am, at the top of the street, he promises to speak to everybody; so does William Wheeler, who goes everywhere; and Mrs. Bromley, at the shop; and the carrier and the post-man. I dare say the whole parish knows it by this time! I have not been outside the gate to-day, but a dozen people have asked me if we had heard of *our* stick! It must turn up soon. If one had but the slightest notion where it was lost! I do declare, Ma'am," continued she, interrupting her lamentations, "that you don't seem to be so much troubled about the poor stick as I am!" And with all her regard for me, I think she was a little scandalised at my philosophy.

"Why you and Sam seem to have done all that can be done," replied I; "and perhaps if we go into the lane we may hear some tidings of my poor staff, for I shall be sorry to lose such an old friend!"

"Ah!" said she, "if one did but know where it dropt out of the chaise!"

And so we set forth, I with a new stick of Sam's purveying, a provisional stick, whose very roughness and imperfection proved that that faithful adherent by no means despaired of recovering my legitimate supporter.

My little damsel was not wrong in accusing me of being calmer than she thought quite becoming under so severe a calamity; but as her inquietude and nervousness proceeded mainly from the state of feverish and impatient expectation, the mixture of hope and fear, in which she had passed the last twenty hours, so the absence of suspense and expectation had much to do with my resignation. I had some suspicion as to the place in which the stick had dropt, and no great hope of finding it.

Day by day, as the sun went down, we had the habit of being taken up at the gate of the short avenue that leads to the old Manor House; an abrupt turn, where the soft turf of the wide lane ends, and the gravel road begins. This road, not much frequented, in general is full of the harvest population during this harvest month; groups of reapers, men and women, full-grown girl and half-grown boy, and little child—the little child who watches by the baby in the cradle whilst the mother reaps. On that side, too, they had just begun to carry the yellow sheaves which studded so richly the great

open corn-fields that bordered one edge of the winding road, as the grounds of the old mansion, with their tall elms and rustic paling, bordered the other. Just in front, crossing the road, and meandering after its own wilful fashion, came the brook, traversed, at the choice of the wayfarer, by a low two-arched bridge, or by a wide shallow ford, just below.

Now this has been a summer of great drought hereabouts, and we suffer much from summer drought in the cottage which we are about to leave, as places that feel most the winter damp very frequently do; the mud of one season baking into a brick-like clay at another; the ponds becoming dry under the same sunny influence, and the wells (for we have two) failing altogether just when they are most wanted. I think the thing of all others which has most reconciled me to quitting the poor old place—the old home with all its faults—is the contrast which the new cottage offers as to water. There we shall have a pump that is never dry; two springs to which the whole parish resorts; the men with yokes and pails, the women with pitchers, almost classical; two clear gushing springs, a pond and a river!

However, we have not yet moved, and this delicious wateriness to come has little profited us during this sultry August. The forefooted part of our family has particularly felt, not the absolute want—for we fetch, and beg, and buy, and all but steal—

but the limitation of that prime luxury of nature. So Sam always drives through the ford to cool the pony's feet, and commonly stops long enough in the middle to allow of his enjoying a good drink of the clear glittering pool; whilst Fanchon, who during the rainy season is as tender of wetting her pretty paws as a cat, has latterly condescended to walk out of the little carriage, in which it is her delight to sit perched, to walk tremblingly and gingerly—something as a fine lady steps out of a bathing-machine, but still to walk down the steps, and drop into the water—drinking in the same slow, mincing, half-reluctant manner, but still drinking, and then pausing upon the brink to be taken home. Yesterday evening, I remembered that instead of walking gingerly down the steps, stopping half a minute upon one, and a whole minute upon the other, according to her usual mode, poor Fanchon, doubtless in a paroxysm of thirst, had fairly jumped out of the phaeton, giving to the whole vehicle such a jolt as her weight hardly seemed capable of producing. Then and there I suspected went the stick; carried off by the slow current, until it became entangled by the sedges on the banks, or sank in one of the deep pools not unfrequent in the stream. So I gave up my poor old friend as drowned beyond all hope of resuscitation, and tried to comfort my little damsel by setting her a very creditable example of resignation.

It was hardly possible to be quite unhappy in a scene of so much healthy stir and bustle as this usually quiet lane exhibited.

My friends the gipsies had no less than three camps with fires glimmering under the hedge, looking beautiful in the dark shadow, as fire always does, or sending up wreaths of curling smoke among the trees, a thin blue vapour more beautiful still. There they were in every picturesque form of work or idleness, making saucepans, weaving baskets, lying on the grass: three camps at small but not unfriendly distance, with one moveable house, a grey horse, and two donkeys.

Then the wheat-carrying, threatened yesterday, was in full activity to-day; and waggons, some loaded, some empty, passed up and down the lane, escorted by stalwart carters and shouting boys. Reapers, too, were there in abundance passing to and fro, and troops of children leasing in the cleared fields, and following the waggons along the lane. Most of these good people had heard of our loss; and questioned my little damsel as to its recovery. Our friends the gipsies were particularly interested in the subject; and there was one black-haired urchin, the laziest of the tribe, a musical genius whom I had never seen before without a fiddle in his hands, but whom we now found, by way of variety, twanging a jewsharp, who intermitted his melody to affirm with so much assurance that he had passed

his whole day in the search, that it was utterly impossible not to give him sixpence.

Well! we at last sate down on our old turf seats, not far from the entrance of a field where an accident had evidently taken place; a loaded waggon must have knocked against the gate, and spilt some of its topmost sheaves. The sheaves were taken away, but the place was strewed with relics of the upset, and a little harvest of the long yellow straw and the rich brown ears remained to tempt the gleaners; and as we were talking over this mischance, and our own, and I was detailing my reasons for believing that my poor stick had found a watery grave, we became aware of two little girls, who stole timidly and quietly up to the place, and began gladly and thankfully to pick up the scattered corn.

Poor little things, we knew them well! we had known their father, dead of consumption scarcely a month ago; and affecting it was to see these poor children, delicate girls of seven and five years old, already at work to help their widowed mother, and rejoicing over the discovery of these few ears of fallen wheat, as if it were the gold mines of California. A drove of pigs was looming in the distance; and my little damsel flung down her work, and sprang up at once to help the poor children. She has a taste for helping people, has my little maid, and puts her whole heart and soul into such kindnesses. It was worth something to see how

she pounced upon every straggling straw, clearing away all round the outside, and leaving the space within for the little girls. She even hinted to me that my new stick would be an efficient weapon against the pigs; and I might have found myself engaged in another combat, but that the ground was cleared before the drove came near.

Pleasant it was to see her zealous activity, and the joy and surprise of the little creatures, who, weak, timid and lonely, had till then only collected about a dozen ears, when they found themselves loaded with more than they could carry. Their faded frocks—not mourning frocks, to wear black every day for a father is too great a luxury for the poor—their frocks were by her contrivance pinned up about them, filled with the golden wheat-ears, and the children went home happy. That home had once been full of comfort and of plenty, for John Kemp, a gentleman's servant, had married the daughter of a small farmer, and had set up a little trade as a baker and shopkeeper. Civil, honest, sober and industrious, the world went well with them for a while, and the shop prospered. But children came many and fast, their largest debtor died insolvent, a showy competitor set up next door, and long before John Kemp was attacked by the fatal malady of England which finally carried him off, poverty had knocked hard at his door. The long illness, the death, the funeral had still farther exhausted their small means, and now little was left,

except that which is best of all, strong family affection, an unstained name, an humble reliance upon Providence, and those habits of virtuous industry and courage to take the world as it is, which seldom fail to win an honest living. The mother and the elder brother undertook the baking and the shop, the eldest daughter carried round the bread, the two next brothers were working in the fields, and the youngest of all we have seen in their efforts to contribute to the general support. Well! it is a hard trial, but it is a good education, an education that can hardly fail to come to good. Many a rich mother might be proud of the two gleaners that we have seen this afternoon. They so pleased and so thankful to carry their poor store to that poor home, they carried thither better things than wheat.

In the meanwhile where, amid all this harvest work, is the "Arcadia?" Between asking questions and answering them, listening to condolences and thanking the condolers, talking to leasers and leasing ourselves, the afternoon has slipt away with little thought of the good knight, Sir Philip Sydney. The sun, which hardly showed his bright face until we reached the lane, is now setting in his glory, and we must wind our way to the avenue-gate, or we may chance to have a hue and cry sent forth about us as lost ourselves. So home we came.

About ten o'clock, after some *riffling* of the lathe,

a pattering of childish feet, and an eager consultation of childish voices, the front gate was tremblingly opened, and after a short pause another little sound of unassured footsteps, and another brief dialogue, a low knock was heard at the hall-door; then the little feet advanced into the house, and the little tongues gained courage to tell their good news. Mary Kemp and her brother Tom had brought back the lost stick.

It appeared that the child had overheard my suspicion, that the missing wand had been dropt in the brook during Fanchon's immersion, and had confided the story to her brother Tom as soon as he returned from his labours in the harvest field. Tom, a bold urchin of ten years old, happened to be one of those boys who may be properly called amphibious; pools, puddles, ponds, seemed to be his natural element, and paddling in the brook his prime enjoyment. Before he left off his petticoats, he haunted the water-side, angling with a bit of string tied on a willow rod, and a crooked pin for a hook, and what is more wonderful contriving to catch with that inartificial contrivance such small fry, roach and dace and minnows, as the stream afforded. Tom knew every inch of the brook, and charmed at the very sound forgot his long day's work, and set forth on the search without even stopping to eat his supper. His little sister followed him to the meadows, and just where the winding rivulet takes a bold sweep round a woody

cape of rich pasture, where the willows and the alders are mixed with tall bulrushes, thither the slow current had carried it, and there it stuck, caught between two stalks of the seeded meadow-sweet, and still farther entangled by the leaves of the water-lily, a part of whose long slimy stalk glistening in the moonlight remained twisted around the ebony knob, a token of its involuntary bath, its peril and its escape. I do not know whether the poor children, my little damsel or I were most rejoiced at the conclusion of the adventure.

But what room has it left for Sir Philip?

Alas! that bravest and most chivalrous of poets, that younger, gentler, more lettered Bayard, *our* knight, without fear and without reproach is fated in the person of his famous pastoral, at least to be "lightlied" (if I may borrow a word from a fine old ballad) by those most bound to do him honour. It cannot be much less than fifty years ago that I heard the following terrible anecdote told quite innocently, without any perception of the reproach that it involved.

A governess at Wilton House, happening to read the "Arcadia," had discovered between two of the leaves folded in paper, as yellow from age as the printed pages between which it reposed, a lock of hair, and on the envelope, enclosing the lock, was written in Sir Philip Sydney's well-known autograph an inscription purporting that the hair was that of her gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth. None of the

family had ever heard of the treasure. So this identical volume, not only dedicated to his beloved sister but entitled by himself "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,"* had remained for two centuries in the library of her descendants, without any one of them ever taking the trouble to open the book! The governess only—no Sydney, no Herbert—had taste enough or curiosity enough to take down the prose poem. I have not the honour of knowing the present master of Wilton, but judging by reputation I do not think that such a neglect could happen now.

After all the "Arcadia" is one of those books which may be best appreciated by specimens. This description of scenery for instance:

"There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets which being lined with most pleasant shade were witnessed so to by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security; while the pretty lambs with bleating

* Others, too, have loved the "Arcadia," always the delight of poets. Happening to look into that neglected but interesting book, "The Life of Hayley," I see that, during a tedious recovery from a severe illness in his childhood, his chief amusement was derived from listening to his mother as she read to him this famous Pastoral.

oratory, craved the dam's comfort; here a shepherd's boy piping as though he should never be old; there a young shepherdess knitting and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice-music."

The account of a stag-hunt is even more characteristic. It abounds in the faults as well as the beauties of the author.

"Then went they together abroad, the good Kalander entertaining them with pleasant discoursing—how well he loved the sport of hunting when he was a young man, how much in the comparison thereof he disdained all chamber delights, that the sun (how great a journey soever he had to make) could never prevent him with earliness, nor the moon with her sober countenance dissuade him from watching till midnight for the deer's feeding. O, said he, you will never live to my age without you keep yourself in breath with exercise and in heart with joyfulness; too much thinking doth consume the spirits; and oft it falls out, that, while one thinks too much of his doing, he leaves to do the effect of his thinking. Then spared he not to remember how much Arcadia was changed since his youth; activity and good-fellowship being nothing in the price it was then held in; but, according to the nature of the old-growing world, still worse and worse. Then would he tell them stories of such gal-

lantry as he had known; and so with pleasant company beguiled the time's haste, and shortened the way's length till they came to the side of the wood where the hounds were in couples staying their coming, but with a whining accent craving liberty; many of them in colour and marks so resembling that it showed they were of one kind. The huntsmen, handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands, to beat the guiltless earth when the hounds were at a fault; and with horns about their necks to sound an alarm upon a silly fugitive; the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging; but even his feet betrayed him, for howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisements, sometimes the view of their faithful counsellors, the huntsmen, with open mouths, then denounced war, when the war was already begun. Their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths, that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skilful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against his own citi-

zens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that leaving his flight, he was driven to make courage of despair; and so turning his head, made the hounds with change of speech to testify that he was at a bay; as if from hot pursuit of their enemy they were suddenly come to a parley."

So far, Sir Philip. Here is another bit of pastoral scenery from the hand of that gentle brother of the angle, Master Izaak Walton, whose portrait of a country milkmaid may vie with "the shepherd's boy piping as though he should never grow old," of the "Arcadia." Piscator and his scholar, Venator, are returning to their inn, after a day's angling. Venator says:

"*Ven.* A good match, master: let's go to that house, for the linen looks white, and smells of lavender. Let's be going, good master, for I am hungry again with fishing.

Pisc. Nay, stay a little, good scholar. I caught my last trout with a worm, now I will put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an hour about yonder trees for another, and so walk towards our lodging. Look you, scholar, thereabouts we shall have a bite presently or not at all. Have with you, Sir. O' my word I have hold of him. Oh it is a great lubber-headed chubb; come, hang him upon that

willow twig, and let us be going. But turn out of the way a little, good scholar, towards yonder high honeysuckle hedge; there we'll sit and sing, whilst this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

" Look, under that broad beech-tree, I sate down when I was last here a fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill: there I sate viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea, yet sometimes opposed by ragged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves, and turned them into foam: and sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs, some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun, and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought as the poet has happily expressed it:

> " 'I was for that time lifted above earth,
> And possessed joys not promised at my birth.'

" As I left this place, and entered the next field, a second pleasure entertained me. It was a handsome milkmaid, that had not yet attained so much

age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men too often do; but she cast away all care, and sang like a nightingale: her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it. It was that smooth song, which was made by Kit Marlowe, now at least fifty years ago; and the milkmaid's mother sung, an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in my younger days.

They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good, I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Look yonder! On my word, yonder they both be a milking again. I will give her the chubb, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

God speed you, good woman! I have been a fishing, and am going to Bleak Hall to my bed, and having caught more fish than will sup myself and my friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none."

Milk-woman. Marry, God requite you, Sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully; and if you come this way a fishing two months hence, a grace of God I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice in a new-made haycock for it; and my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads, and she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men; in the meantime, will you drink a draught of red cow's milk? You shall have it freely!

Pisc. No, I thank you; but I pray you do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt. It is but to sing us a song that was sung by your daughter when I last passed over this meadow, eight or nine days since.

Milk-woman. What song was it, I pray? Was it "Come shepherds deck your herds!" or "As at noon Dulcina rested?" or "Phillida flouts me?" or "Chevy Chase?" or "Johnny Armstrong?" or "Troy Town?"

Pisc. No, it is none of those. It is a song that your daughter sang the first part and you sang the answer to it.

Milk-woman. O, I know it now. I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter; and the lower part, which indeed fits me best now, but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me. But you shall, God willing, hear them both, and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers. Come, Maudlin, sing the first part to the gentlemen with a merry heart, and I'll sing the second when you have done.

THE MILKMAID'S SONG.

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, or hills, or field
Or woods and steepy mountains yield.

Where we will sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed our flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And then a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered o'er with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Slippers lined choicely for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd-swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Ven. Trust me, master, it is a choice song and sweetly sung by honest Maudlin. I now see it was not without cause that our good Queen Elizabeth did so often wish herself a milkmaid all the month of May, because they are not troubled with fears

and cares, but sing sweetly all the day and sleep securely all the night, and without doubt honest, innocent, pretty Maudlin does so. I'll bestow Sir Thomas Overbury's milkmaid's wish upon her, "That she may die in the spring, and being dead may have good store of flowers stuck round about her winding-sheet."

THE MILKMAID'S MOTHER'S ANSWER.

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
Then Philomel becometh dumb,
And age complains of care to come.

The flowers do fade and wanton fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yields;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall
Is fancy's Spring but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

What should we talk of dainties then,
Of better meat than's fit for men?
These are but vain; that's only good
Which God hath blest and sent for food.

But could youth last and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

Mother. Well, I have done my song."

And a delicious song it is. Certainly it was not amongst the least of the many excellencies of Izaak Walton's charming book, that he helped to render popular so many pure and beautiful lyrics. Marlowe's poem, indeed, could never die, for it had been quoted by Shakespeare; but Sir Walter Raleigh's reply is still finer.

We wonder in reading the milkwoman's list of songs and ballads which looks like a table of contents to one of the books into which Bishop Percy divided his volumes, whether the country lasses of those days, southern lasses too, for the colloquy passes upon the banks of the Lea, did actually sing border war-songs like "Chevy Chase," or classical legends like "Troy Town." I fear me that their more lettered successors would select very inferior specimens of lyrical composition.

I must add one more extract if only for the sake of "holy Mr. Herbert's" four stanzas.

"And now, scholar, my direction for fly-fishing is ended with this shower, for it has done raining: and now look about you and see how pleasantly that meadow looks; nay, and the earth smells as sweetly too. Come, let me tell you what holy Mr. Herbert says of such days and flowers as these; and then we will thank God that we enjoy them, and walk to the river and sit down quietly and try to catch the other brace of trouts:

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night—
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in the grave—
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows you have your closes—
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber never gives;
But when the whole world turns to coal—
Then chiefly lives.

Besides "The Complete Angler," Izaak Walton has left us a volume containing four or five lives of

eminent men quite as fine as that great Pastoral, although in a very different way. His life of Dr. Donne, the satirist and theologian, contains an account of a vision (the apparition of a beloved wife in England passing before the waking eyes of her husband in Paris) which both for the clearness of the narration and the undoubted authenticity of the event, is amongst the most interesting that is to be found in the long catalogue of supernatural visitations.

END OF VOL I.

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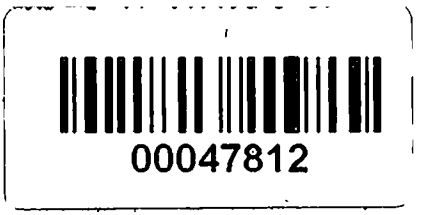
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